

FEBRUARY 13, 1994
JORDAN TIMES
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Zyilli sees Palestinian state ahead
TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The secretary-general of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's Labour party said Saturday that Israel would have to agree to a Palestinian state and recognise Syrian sovereignty on the Golan Heights in return for peace. Nissim Zyilli, confirming an Israel Radio report of his views made on Friday before an Israeli group, said: "If there is peace at the end of this century it will be after we recognise the sovereignty of Syria on the Golan and I believe the Palestinians will adopt the position of having a Palestinian state." "We (Labour) don't believe it (a Palestinian state) is the best solution now, but I don't believe we'll be able to force the Palestinians to accept another option," he said. "It seemed to me that those are going to be the prices." "I can foresee that the Palestinians will prefer the option of an independent state, maybe as part of a confederation with Jordan," said Mr. Zyilli. The Labour leader's statements drew criticism Saturday from the hawkish opposition and right-wingers in Labour. Rafael Eitan of the far-right Tzomet Party said that if Mr. Zyilli's views were shared by Mr. Rabin, the countdown on Israel's survival had already begun.



Siniora heads Palestinian banking group
OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel's Bank Leumi said on Saturday that Jerusalem publisher Hanna Siniora would head a group of Palestinian businessmen who intend to set up a commercial bank with Leumi and banks from Morocco and Spain. "The agreement on setting up the bank was already announced. What is news is the announcement of the Palestinian partners," Bank Leumi spokesman Yona Fogel, who confirmed an Israel Radio report on Mr. Siniora's involvement, told Reuters. "This consortium will be led by the Palestinian group," he said. In December, Bank Leumi said it was forming a group with Morocco's Banque Commerciale du Maroc and Spain's Banco Central Hispano for a bank in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Mr. Siniora is a prominent publisher from Arab East Jerusalem who recently set up a Palestinian-European chamber of commerce. The group would probably apply to the Bank of Israel next week to set up the bank to be called International Palestinian Bank, Mr. Fogel said. The partners would invest \$10 million each. The central bank's equity requirement is \$20 million.

Iraq urges slash in oil output
BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq called Saturday on all oil exporting countries to cut production to boost prices. Oil Minister Safaa Hadi Jawad told the government newspaper Al Jumhuriyah that "halting the fall in prices requires all oil producers, whether they are OPEC members or not, to decrease production." "Major producers, like Saudi Arabia, should also adopt policies which take into consideration world oil demand," Iraq is prevented from exporting oil by U.N. sanctions imposed after the invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. Before that, Iraq, a member of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, used to produce 3.1 million barrels per day. Mr. Jawad hailed Oman's decision to cut its 800,000 b/d output by five per cent from Jan. 1 in a bid to boost prices.

Arafat expects final accord soon, urges pressure on Israel

TUNIS (Agencies) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said Saturday he expects to sign a final deal with Israel by the end of the month to launch Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, the Palestinian agency Wafa reported. The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) would continue its efforts to achieve a "precise and faithful implementation" of the Sept. 13 autonomy deal, he said. Mr. Arafat spoke after briefing Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali on the PLO-Israel security pact signed in Cairo on Wednesday, which overcame some of the obstacles to launching self-rule. Israel's withdrawal is due to be completed by April 13. The two sides will resume talks in Egypt on Monday to finalise agreement on autonomy. Mr. Arafat has written to world leaders demanding that Israel prove its credibility and implement the self-rule agreement. Wafa reported on Saturday that Mr. Arafat had sent messages to the United States, Russia, China, Syria, members of the European Union, the Organisation of African Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement. The letters reported on the partial security agreement reached in Cairo which is intended to end the delay in implementing Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. Mr. Arafat "has clarified the obstacles Israel puts in the way of the implementation of the agreement," Wafa said. The PLO leader "insisted that the Israeli side is called upon to show credibility in implementing the concluded accords," it added. PLO representative in Cairo Saeed Kamal said Palestinian and Israeli delegations should speed up their negotiation and aim to put final signatures on a peace accord by the end of this month. Mr. Kamal said the PLO and Israeli teams should agree on a final draft accord by the end of February. "Haste should be the goal of the negotiators so that the final signing can be done by the end of this month, so that actual, on-the-ground implementation (of the accord) can begin in preparation for the entry of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to the Jericho area and the Gaza Strip," Mr. Kamal told reporters. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has said a final agreement could take another month to complete. Nabil Shaath, political adviser to Mr. Arafat, told Saturday's Al Ahran daily that "the Palestinians prefer the talks take place in Cairo while the Israelis want Tabá," but that no venue had been set. Dr. Shaath said three committees would participate in the discussions: A civil affairs committee, a security committee and a committee for a proposed general pardon for Palestinian detainees in Israel. The security committee will study the creation of a Palestinian police force. "The PLO suggests it be made up of 9,000 men while Israel does not want it to exceed 6,000, including the civil defence and intelligence services," he said. The civil committee will review issues that remain unresolved, including water, electricity and archaeology. Discussions on a general amnesty will focus on "release of all the Palestinian detainees by next July at the latest," he said. Dr. Shaath said the number of those prisoners had dropped from 11,000 to 9,000 following several releases of Palestinians since Sept. 13. (Continued on page 5)



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday confers with French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe (Petra photo)

Juppe reaffirms French support of Jordan economy

King meets French foreign minister on peace process and bilateral ties

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe arrived here Saturday on the first leg of a Middle East tour which will take him to Israel and the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip. Shortly after his arrival, the top French diplomat went into talks with His Majesty King Hussein and senior officials at the Royal Court. The King and Mr. Juppe discussed the security agreement reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) last week and progress in the Middle East peace negotiations in general. The King, according to the Jordan news agency, Petra, briefed Mr. Juppe on Jordan's position in support of the peace process based on international legitimacy and U.N. resolutions 242, 338 and 425. Upon his arrival at Marka airport, Mr. Juppe told reporters his country had always called for a dialogue between Israel and the PLO and other countries in the region. "France enthusiastically supported the Sept. 13 agreement between Israel and the PLO and the Jordan-Israel agenda," Mr. Juppe said in a short press conference at the airport. "It is imperative that the peace process is supported by all sides and we hope that bilateral talks in Washington would achieve progress," he added. Mr. Juppe said his country, one of Jordan's three largest creditors, is "well aware" of the burdens of the debts on the Kingdom's economy. "We are ready to help Jordan reschedule its debts during the Paris Club talks in March," The Kingdom's debt to Paris is estimated at \$900 million. France has helped Jordan reschedule part of its \$6.8 billion foreign debt twice before. We are ready again to help Jordan reschedule its debts... Jordan can depend on France in that regard," Mr. Juppe said. He also said relations between Jordan and France were "good" and that his visit here was an "opportunity for me to reiterate the French government's endeavour to consolidate relations with Jordan." Bilateral relations, he said, "are already good, and we can improve them." Mr. Juppe, fresh from talks in Sarajevo, said the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was determined to see through its ultimatum on Bosnian Serbs to lift their siege of the Bosnian capital. "This ultimatum has to be taken seriously by all the warring parties," he said. "Some encouraging signs are emerging on the scene, with both Serbs and Muslim Bosnians starting to surrender heavy arms to the control of the United Nations," he said. "I hope the 10-day (ultimatum) period will allow the voice of reason to prevail." The French foreign minister, who spoke in French through an interpreter, said his visit to (Continued on page 5)

Amman awaits word on Yemeni accord signing

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — Jordan has not been officially informed of the Yemeni mediation committee's decision to sign the reconciliation agreement between former South and North Yemen in Amman on Feb. 20, official sources said Saturday. But Minister of Information Jawad Anani said Jordan would welcome a decision to sign the accord in Amman "if our brothers in Yemen have decided so." The sources said, however, that Jordan would not sponsor the signing of the reconciliation accord unless it is clear that the agreement would succeed in ending the conflict between Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh. News agencies Friday quoted the spokesman of the Yemeni dialogue committee, Ahmad Jaber Afeef, as saying that the committee had agreed "with our Jordanian brethren" to have the accord signed in Amman on Feb. 20. Agence France-Presse quoted a Yemeni official it did not name as saying that leaders of the three parties in the governing coalition would attend the signing ceremony to which Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat would be invited. An official source did not specifically say whether Mr. Arafat would attend the signing ceremony if it takes place in Amman. But this source said that Sultan Qaboos of Oman, who mediated between the Yemeni parties, would be invited. Diplomatic sources in Amman said that Yemeni parties are divided on which Arab leaders should be invited to the signing ceremony, adding that some prefer that only Yemeni officials attend it. The sources refused to give any details about arrangements for signing the accord, which was reached on Jan. 18. Sources said that some Arab parties are not happy with plans for having the reconciliation agreement signed in Jordan, which played a major role in mediation efforts between Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh. "This could be one major reason why the plans are not materialising as soon as we would like," one source said. His Majesty King Hussein said last week that Jordan was very concerned with the situation in Yemen and "would do everything possible" to help solve the conflict, which threatened the merger of the formerly socialist South and conservative North. The agreement was supposed to be signed in Amman early this month but the date was scuttled after new differences emerged between Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh. The Yemeni crisis developed (Continued on page 5)

Qadhafi: Clinton is not anti-Libya
TRIPOLI (AFP) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi said Saturday he was convinced that deep down U.S. President Bill Clinton is not against Libya but is acting under Israeli pressure. Colonel Qadhafi was reacting to Mr. Clinton's annual report to the Congress on U.S.-Libyan relations, published Thursday, in which he said Libya posed an "extraordinary threat" to U.S. security. "Clinton seems to have said this for many reasons, most probably under pressure" from Israel, Col. Qadhafi said, quoted by the official news agency JANA. "Clinton himself doesn't believe what he told Congress," but Libya will ask the United Nations to investigate this "serious accusation" and Mr. Clinton "will have to prove it," Col. Qadhafi added. Col. Qadhafi has always shown sympathy for Mr. Clinton, saying that the latter's opposition to the Vietnam war, while he was still an Oxford student, proved he was a "friend of oppressed peoples."

Saudis upset Egypt with Haj restrictions
CAIRO (R) — Saudi Arabia has upset Egyptian travel agents by reducing the quota for Egyptians making the pilgrimage to Mecca and by banning pilgrims coming by land. The Saudis admitted 110,000 pilgrims last year but Interior Minister Hassan Al Ali said in an interview published on Saturday that this year's quota was only 60,000. The Saudis originally offered to take 75,000 in 1993 but after many complaints they accepted more applications. The travel agents, already hit by a militant campaign against tourism to Egypt, are suing the government.

U.S. fighter crashes in Adriatic; crew safe
GAETA, Italy (AFP) — Two U.S. fighters collided in mid-air over the Adriatic Sea on Saturday sending one jet crashing into the sea, a U.S. military spokesman said here. The two-man crew managed to eject safely from their F-14 fighter after it hit an F-18 in mid-flight, and were later picked up by a helicopter from the U.S. warship Wilkesburg, said U.S. Sixth Fleet spokesman Major Graham Curry. The pilot of the F-18 managed to regain control of his aircraft and land at the Italian air force base of Brindisi, on Italy's southern Adriatic coast.

Soviet soldiers still held in Afghanistan
MOSCOW (R) — Nearly 300 Soviet servicemen are still being held in Afghanistan, five years after the last Soviet forces officially withdrew, Russian Deputy Defence Minister Boris Gromov said Saturday. Mr. Gromov was speaking at a news conference to mark the anniversary of the Soviet pull-out after a 10-year military adventure in which an estimated 7,000 Soviet soldiers were killed.

Syria rejects Israeli call for 'second channel' for peace talks

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria Saturday rejected an Israeli call for a widening of their peace talks as a maneuver aimed at putting the negotiations in a "futile circle." Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Saturday in an Israel Radio broadcast that the talks in Washington between Syrian and Israeli negotiators be expanded with higher level contacts. He repeated Israel's demand that Syrian President Hafez Al Assad should meet Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin directly to convince the Israeli public he is serious about peace. "It would be desirable to have a Rabin-Assad summit," Mr. Peres said. "Afterwards, the negotiations have to move to a political level," he added. "We need a second channel, not just one." Damascus Radio responded that "Israeli calls to raise the level of negotiations are no more than a manoeuvre and pretext to indulge the talks in a futile circle and distance them from peace." The radio said the Washington talks have been in a "vicious circle" for more than two years because of Israeli refusal to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions. The resolutions call on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories in exchange for peace with the Arabs. "Instead of responding to these resolutions, Israel continues to stick to its demand for upgrading the level of peace negotiations," the radio said. The commentary maintained that conflicts are usually settled on basic principles first before other matters are discussed. "Negotiators in most cases present a declaration of principles and get deeply into minute details before talking about higher levels of negotiations," (Continued on page 3)

No more handover of arms, but Sarajevo ceasefire holds

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — The disarmament of Sarajevo was suspended Saturday as Bosnian Serb and Bosnian government forces failed to hand over fresh batches of heavy weapons to U.N. troops. But the most effective truce yet during Sarajevo's 22-month siege continued into its third day intact. Bosnian Serb officers negotiating with their Muslim counterparts at Sarajevo airport Saturday morning had failed to gain authorisation to continue the disarmament process, a United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) official said. The process got off to a good start Friday, when Bosnian Serbs put under U.N. control 13 artillery pieces, while the mainly-Muslim Bosnian government side handed over five mortars. The handovers were in line with the ceasefire, which began midday Thursday, and a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ultimatum giving the Serbs until February 21 to withdraw their heavy weapons from around the city or face air strikes. No progress was reached in the U.N.-brokered airport talks because the Serb delegation "told us that it did not have a full mandate to negotiate," the UNPROFOR official said. "The Bosnian (government) side accepted (the process) unanimously," the official said, adding that another meeting of more senior officers from both sides would be held Sunday. "That will perhaps allow the handover of weapons to resume on a bilateral basis," he added. Meanwhile in Geneva the latest round of all-party peace talks seeking a negotiated settlement to three-way fighting throughout Bosnia ended Saturday without progress, said U.N. mediator Thorvald Stoltenberg. He said talks would resume at the end of February or early March, allowing time for changes in light of the NATO air strikes deadline and fresh diplomatic initiatives from Moscow and Washington. Bosnian Serb and Muslim representatives confirmed the Sarajevo ceasefire was being "generally respected," and pledged to "exercise control over uncontrolled elements" among both forces, said UNPROFOR spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Richard Lewis. Each side had fired three shells and briefly exchanged small arms fire overnight, but no casualties were reported, he said. The quantity of weapons handed over Friday was insignificant given the firepower both sides possess in and around the city, but peacekeepers said the handover was of great symbolic importance. Meanwhile, NATO, putting on the biggest show of allied air might since the 1991 Gulf (Continued on page 5)

Cabinet endorses draft law on sales tax, sends it to Parliament

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — The Council of Ministers on Saturday endorsed a draft law introducing a sales tax and sent it to Parliament for debate and approval after amendments as lawmakers find fit, Finance Minister Sami Gammoh said. Mr. Gammoh said the draft law was forwarded to the legislature as emergency legislation but it was up to Parliament to decide when to take up the issue. The draft was supposed to have been endorsed by the Cabinet on Tuesday but the process was delayed pending a final reading of the text of the law by the government committee on interpretation of legislation. The sales tax is part of the economic restructuring programme that Jordan is implementing in coordination with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which had set a February deadline for its introduction. An IMF certification that Jordan is implementing the economic programme is essential before the Kingdom could open debt rescheduling negotiations with its main creditors. French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, speaking to reporters on his arrival here on a two-day visit Saturday, said the negotiations were tentatively scheduled for March (see separate story). Mr. Gammoh said that while the government would like to have the law clear Parliament as soon as possible it would not pressure the legislature. "We will not interfere with the rights of Parliament," Mr. Gammoh told the Jordan Times. "It is up to (the lawmakers) to decide when to debate the law." The draft legislation was in the pipeline for the past 30 months and had drawn opposition from businessmen who argued that it would lead to increased prices in the market and less profits for themselves. According to government officials, the final version of the law is a compromise between the 30-month-old draft and the demands of the businessmen as well as consumer interest groups, such as the Society for the Protection of Consumers and the services sector. Mr. Gammoh noted that the draft law replaces a 1992 legislation on consumption tax and that the ceiling for the levy has been brought down to 20 per cent from the 60 per cent in the 1992 law. The minister also rejected suggestions that the sales tax would lead to higher prices in the market, pointing out that the levy was JD 180 million, the same as collected in consumption tax during fiscal 1993. Another argument by the minister, in defence of the draft law, is that it is not different from similar legislation in other countries and absorbs various elements drawn from 85 countries. The draft law clearly defines the rates of applicable tax on various items starting from a general tax of 10 per cent — for the same category of items covered under the same rate in the consumption tax law — Mr. Gammoh said. The draft law also includes a list of basic items such as food, medicine and education material exempt from the law. Government officials describe the exemptions as one of the main built-in mechanisms in the law to protect the low-income groups. The second phase of the law — where it would expand to cover the services sector and professionals — will take effect in the third year after the enactment of the legislation after approval from Parliament and the issuance of a Royal Decree approving it. Fierce opposition is expected from many deputies in Parliament who reject the IMF programme as well as those who have been lobbied by the business community. Participating in the discussions that led to the finalisation of the draft law were representatives of the various in- (Continued on page 5)

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Peres: Israel 'must come to Arafat's aid'

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel must help Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and other Palestinians who are being criticised over peace negotiations, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Friday on Israeli Television.

"Israel must come to the aid of Arafat and to Palestinians who feel they are in a difficult situation," Mr. Peres said in an interview.

"We would be wrong not to take into account the feelings of our negotiating partners and not to give them reasons to pursue the talks," he added.

"Establishing confidence is more important than signing agreements, because without confidence those agreements are worth nothing."

A historic "land for peace" deal due to be implemented in mid-January has been delayed as the two sides tried to work out details.

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) finally signed an agreement in Cairo on Wednesday providing security arrangements for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho region on the West Bank. But a number of problems remain unresolved.

Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat have now agreed to continue negotiations early next week, Israeli Television said Friday.

A foreign ministry spokesman told AFP that the two men had spoken on the telephone but could not specify when the talks would resume.

Earlier Friday, Mr. Peres questioned the wisdom of maintaining certain Israeli settlements in the occupied territories as Palestinian self-rule begins.

But Israel will not be forced into evacuating them, he said. Asked by Israeli Radio if some settlements should be abandoned to secure peace with the Palestinians, Mr. Peres said: "Not under the pressure of negotiations."

He added: "I'll tell you the truth, there are some questions that have to be asked out loud."

"What is the point of maintaining a settlement with 28 families that needs workers from Thailand, that needs an army platoon to guard them, need to have their road guarded by patrols? Where is the logic? What is the point?"

Mr. Peres was referring to the isolated settlement of Netzarim in the Gaza Strip, where 28 families live in the middle of an area slated for Palestinian self-rule.

About 120,000 Jewish settlers live among two million Palestinians in about 140 heavily-guarded enclaves in the occupied lands.

Hundreds of Israelis are employed as cheap labour on farms because settlers are reluctant to employ Palestinians after a rash of killings of bosses by their workers.

Under the September PLO-Israel peace accord, the settlements are to remain during a five-year Palestinian self-rule period.

They will be subject to negotiation during final status talks to begin two years after the start of self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

A government spokesman said talks on the stalled Israeli troop withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho would resume in Taba, Egypt, on Monday.

Army chief Ehud Barak said on Friday an Israeli troop withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho would take six to eight weeks after Israel and the PLO signed a final agreement on implementing Palestinian self-rule.

General Barak told state television in an interview Israel could prevent Palestinian workers from Gaza entering Israel after the withdrawal if attacks on Israelis continued. Two Israelis were killed by Palestinians this week.

Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat on Wednesday bridged gaps that delayed the start of the pull-out, which under the peace accord was due to begin on Dec. 13.

'Arafat is tense'

Mr. Peres said the Yasser Arafat he got to know in marathon negotiating sessions last week was often tense, anxious and had a hard time making decisions.

But Mr. Peres also expressed admiration for Arafat's former arch-enemy, saying the PLO chief was a survivor who had managed to keep the Palestinian issue on the world's agenda for 25 years.

In an interview with the Yedioth Ahronoth daily published Friday, Mr. Peres told several anecdotes describing how relations between Israel and the PLO warmed during the negotiations.

Mr. Peres recalled a moment in which the two sides debated whether a Palestinian "terrorist" could be stopped from crossing into the autonomous Palestinian enclaves.

"Arafat said: 'In such a case, I couldn't pass. I told him: 'Don't adorn yourself with someone else's feathers. Today you are an ex-terrorist,'" Mr. Peres said.

"In the beginning, he was surprised. Then he suddenly understood what I meant, I told him: 'It's not just us who have changed in our attitude towards you. You have also changed,'" the foreign minister added.

Mr. Peres said that before he actually met Mr. Arafat, he had expected to find an impatient and hasty man. Instead, Mr. Arafat often hesitated and wavered when faced with making decisions.

Still, Mr. Peres concluded that Mr. Arafat was Israel's best possible negotiating partner. "Arafat is a survivor," Mr. Peres said. "There is no one who is more widely accepted among the Palestinians than he is. I didn't have problems negotiating with him."

"As opposed to all the rumours, I didn't find him to be high-strung. He is very tense... I sensed a certain anxiety," Mr. Peres added.

In one exchange, Mr. Arafat complained about what he considered Israel's too limited view of autonomy in the occupied Gaza Strip and Jericho. Mr. Peres recalled.

"Arafat told me at one point: 'What do you want to turn me into? The mukhtar (headman) of a small village,'" Mr. Peres said.

"I told him: 'Don't forget that when the state of Israel was founded in 1948, it had only 650,000 residents. Today, you are the leader of nearly one million Palestinians,'" he said, referring to the population of the Gaza and Jericho regions covered by autonomy.



An old man waits for handouts in Kabul. He is among the thousands displaced by the recent factional fighting in Afghanistan (AFP photo)

OIC seeks lasting Afghan peace

DUBAI (Agencies) — The 51-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which has appealed for a ceasefire in Afghanistan during the Holy Month of Ramadan, said it would do all it could to achieve lasting peace.

The OIC, in a statement issued late on Friday from its headquarters in Jeddah, quoted Secretary-General Hamid Al Ghabid as saying the organisation "was ready to play any role in encouraging lasting unconditional peace and to end disagreements between the Muslim brothers in Afghanistan."

"He (Ghabid) asserted that a ceasefire is essential to allow the organisation and other friends of Afghanistan to help our Afghan brothers overcome this tragic phase in their history," said the statement, carried by the Saudi Press Agency.

Mr. Ghabid made the appeal for an unconditional ceasefire during the Holy Month of fasting while on a visit to Pakistan to meet representatives of warring Afghan factions. Ramadan began on Friday.

Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani has accepted the appeal and Mr. Ghabid said at the end of his trip to Pakistan on Friday that he hoped other factions would follow suit.

There was no immediate information on the response of Mr. Rabbani's opponents, led by Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum.

Red Cross officials say some 800 people have been killed and more than 10,000 injured in the latest round of factional fighting that erupted on the new year's day in the capital, Kabul.

Previous appeals for a truce from the OIC — the principal world organisation of Muslim states — the United Nations and neighbouring countries have been ignored.

More than 111,000 people, mainly civilians, have been killed in previous rounds in the battle for supremacy in Kabul among the rival factions in the fractious coalition government set up after the guerrillas took power from the former communist government in April 1992.

Mr. Ghabid visited officials of both sides in the northwestern Pakistani town of Peshawar.

He urged leaders of both sides to hold their fire during the month of fasting and to seek a permanent solution to their differences.

Mestiri mission

Former Tunisian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mestiri was named Friday to head a mission to Afghanistan to discuss how the United Nations could best assist with national reconciliation and reconstruction.

The General Assembly, in a resolution last December, asked Secretary-General Boutros Ghali to send the mission as soon as possible to obtain the views of a broad spectrum of Afghan leaders.

The secretary-general's special representative for Afghanistan, Sotirios Mousouris, will also take part but no other details of the mission have yet been announced.

U.N. team installs cameras at Iraqi facility

MANAMA, Bahrain (Agencies) — U.N. nuclear experts returned here Friday after installing surveillance cameras at an engineering complex in Iraq as part of an accelerated U.N. arms monitoring programme.

Work speeded up after Iraq in November acknowledged a U.N. Security Council resolution on long-term weapons monitoring in the hope of an quick end to the U.N. oil and trade embargo clamped after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

"Certainly on this mission, when we've asked to see a facility, when we've asked to see a piece of equipment, or when we've asked to see a person, they made arrangements for us to do that," said the 17-member team's British leader, Garry Dillon.

Speaking to reporters at the inspectors' regional headquarters in Bahrain, Mr. Dillon said his team installed four cameras at Um Al Maariq engineering facility, about a 20-minute drive from Baghdad.

With the cameras, experts expect to know if at any time in the future Iraq tries to produce equipment that can be used to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons.

Mr. Dillon's team also tagged machinery and sought information from the Iraqis on a variety of topics. "We had a very positive response," he said.

In all, a total of 23 facilities around the country will be equipped for monitoring to ensure that Iraq does not try to revive its nuclear arms programme, Mr. Dillon said.

Horst Reeps, a German who recently led a team of chemical weapons experts to Iraq, told reporters that 250 pieces of equipment used to produce pesticides and pharmaceuticals were checked and tagged to make sure the Iraqis don't use them to produce chemical weapons.

Iraq was the first country since World War I known to have used internationally prohibited nerve gases in its 1980-88 war with Iran.

Iraq denies charges

Baghdad on Friday denied charges by a U.S. senator that a virus provided by the United States to Iraq years ago was behind the "Gulf war syndrome" suffered by hundreds of U.S. soldiers.

An official spokesman cited by the Iraqi News Agency (INA) said European and U.S. scientists had shown that the causes of the disease were "the heavy use by the American army of shells covered with enriched uranium."

"The United States has for some time covered up the real causes of the mysterious disease that has afflicted its troops during the Gulf war and misled American public opinion by offering fabricated reasons," he said.

On Wednesday Senator Don Riegle, a Michigan Democrat who chairs a Senate health sub-committee, said Washington had legally supplied Iraq with deadly biological agents during the Reagan administration that may have been used against U.S. troops who later suffered from nausea, muscular pains and skin diseases.

Sudanese government imposes dress code, school segregation

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Sudan has decreed that all female students must cover all parts of their body except the face and hands in line with the Islamic dress code.

The Islamic-dominated government also ordered that female and male students must be taught in separate classes from their sixth year in elementary school.

Education Minister Ibrahim Ahmad Omar said on state television on Thursday night that the government was building an Islamic state and it was imperative all students followed the Muslim way of life.

Military ruler General Omar Hassan Al Bashir put Sudan under Sharia in January 1991. Three months later he approved a penal code derived primarily from Sharia.

The minister acknowledged that in other countries the upbringing of children was separated from their school regime. "For us the two cannot be separated," Gen. Omar declared.

Gen. Omar said schools in the capital Khartoum had been given one year to organise facilities for segregated schools. Provincial schools had two years to comply.

The new directives had been approved by Sudan's nominated parliament earlier in the week, the minister said.

An elite Roman Catholic girls' school in Khartoum closed for a week last August when it balked at a government order that its 800 teenage students wear Islamic dress instead of their customary uniform.

The 91-year-old Catholic Sisters Secondary School reopened with a compromise in which Muslim girls wore Islamic dress and non-Muslims adopted longer skirts but not the veil.

Peace bid

President Bashir will meet

Former settlement activist named E. Jerusalem adviser

A FORMER senior official in the Ateret Cohanim settlement group has been named a municipal advisor on eastern Jerusalem affairs, outraging the city's Arab community.

Meir Davidson, who helped spearhead the purchase of Arab property in eastern Jerusalem for settlement groups, presented himself as a city eastern Jerusalem affairs advisor in recent meetings with residents of Arab neighbourhoods.

The eastern Jerusalem daily Al Nahar described Davidson in a front page article as a "fanatic settler activist," who had been named the advisor on Arab affairs to the city's eight deputy mayors.

Davidson (Thursday) confirmed that he was appointed to the post, but said he was unfairly described in the report.

"We see eastern Jerusalem as part of Jerusalem," Davidson said. "I am here to serve both the Jews living in the City of David and Arabs in Ras el-Amud," Davidson said.

Arab sources said there was widespread concern in eastern Jerusalem that Davidson's main goal would be to push Jewish settlement, as he did when he worked with Ateret Cohanim.

Davidson told The Jerusalem Post he no longer worked for the group, and saw no

Kenyan President Daniel Arab Moi to discuss regional efforts to end fighting between the Khartoum government and southern rebels, a Sudanese minister has said.

Foreign Minister Hussein Suleiman Abu Saleh gave no date for Gen. Bashir and Mr. Moi to meet, but the talks would come at a time when aid workers report the government has mounted a massive offensive against the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

Tens of thousands of terrified refugees have been streaming towards the Ugandan border and aid workers on Thursday reported the SPLA rebels had abandoned the important southern village of Mundri, northeast of Sudan's border with Zaire.

The Khartoum government has denied that its planes have attacked civilian targets, as reported by relief workers.

Mr. Abu Saleh, quoted by Sudanese Television on Thursday upon his return from a ministerial meeting of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa, said Gen. Bashir and Mr. Moi would discuss progress in the peace initiative of the regional Inter-Governmental Authority of Drought and Development (IGADD).

Mr. Moi along with Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni, President Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia and President Isayas Afewerki of Eritrea have been trying to mediate an end to the 10-year civil war in southern Sudan.

African diplomats said after IGADD-mediated talks between the Khartoum government and the rebels in Nairobi last month that there had been no progress in ending the conflict.

The television quoted Mr. Abu Saleh as saying arrangements have been completed for the Sudanese government to meet with representatives of the IGADD countries.

Conflict of interest problems in his trying to work with both settlers and Arab residents of eastern Jerusalem.

He denied allegations by the Arab sources that earlier this week he tried to convince an Arab homeowner in the Old City to drop a court petition against Ateret Cohanim, in return for having the city hold up a demolition order on his home.

He said he did meet with the homeowner, but only afterwards did the issue of the court case come up, and that no deal was offered.

Amir Cheshin, the mayor's advisor on Arab affairs, said the appointment of Davidson was made without consultation or coordination with him.

"It is unthinkable that someone else should be working in the same field as me, without even speaking to me about what he is doing, even after he has done it," Cheshin said.

Davidson works out of the office of Deputy Mayor Shmuel Meir (NRP), and according to municipal sources was appointed to the post by Meir without the knowledge of Mayor Ehud Olmert.

The municipality spokesman had no comment, and referred any questions on the matter to Meir, who could not be reached — The Jerusalem Post.

Palestinian opposition sees accord widening its support

By Sulaiman Al Khalidi
Reuters

AMMAN — Hardline Palestinian leaders and disaffected Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) members said on Friday the latest agreement in Cairo widened Palestinian opposition to the overall Israel-PLO accord because it only consolidated Israel's security control.

"It will inflate and expand the Palestinian opposition to the leadership of (Yasser) Arafat and will bring reluctant supporters of the peace agreement to the side of rejectionist forces," Ibrahim Ghoshe, spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, told Reuters.

"The agreement has not given any hope to the Palestinian people to be able to breathe from the pressure of occupation. It only exposes the weakness of Arafat's leadership who totally submitted to the terms of the Jewish side," Mr. Ghoshe added.

Hamas active in the Israeli-occupied territories, is violently opposed on ideological grounds to the Jewish state. It carries out armed attacks on Israeli targets and has vowed to wreck the accord on limited Palestinian rule signed in September by Israel and the

PLO

Mr. Ghoshe said that what "Arafat was given in Cairo is no more than a protectorate encircled from all sides by the Zionists and there is no route out, except through the occupation forces."

Abdullah Hourani, a PLO Executive Committee member who froze his participation after the landmark September accord in protest at its terms, said: "The accord translates the details of the Oslo agreement's Israel control into all aspects of Palestinian self-rule."

"Israel has succeeded in securing all the privileges and control to consolidate its occupation," Mr. Hourani added.

Tayseer Khaled, another former colleague in the Executive Committee who no longer participates in the top PLO leadership body meetings in Tunis, echoed similar sentiment.

"We will continue to fight with all the parties opposed to the Gaza-Jericho accord to foil the new agreement which transforms the occupied territories to protectorates under Israeli sovereignty," said Mr. Khaled, a senior politburo member of the Damascus based-Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine

(DFLP), lead by Nayef Hawatmeh.

"The Cairo agreement" was illegal and does not bind the Palestinian people," Mr. Khaled added saying that "Arafat did not refer the accord to any of the PLO bodies, he continues in his undemocratic practices by taking on his own fateful decisions that affect the present and future of the Palestinian people."

"This is a destructive policy practised by the head of the Executive Committee which only further sows divisions in the ranks of the PLO and the Palestinian people," Mr. Khaled said.

The senior DFLP official called on the PLO chief to respect "the will of the Palestinian people" and submit the Cairo agreement and the September accord "to a popular referendum so that the people outside and inside can give their say."

Sheikh Assad Bayoud Al Tamimi, spiritual leader of an Islamic Jihad faction and a one time close ally of Mr. Arafat, said the Cairo accord "did not give anything to the Palestinians, the Jews have everything in their hands, the crossings, borders, roads and if they want can arrest Yasser Arafat himself."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 ... Feature Film: "L'Effrontee"
19:00 ... News in French
19:15 ... Centre Sur
19:30 ... News in Hebrew
20:00 ... News in Arabic
20:30 ... You Bet Your Life
21:10 ... Out of the Past
22:00 ... News in English
22:30 ... Island Son
23:10 ... The Golden Palace

PRAYER TIMES
04:59 ... Fajr
06:17 ... (Sunrise) Duha
11:50 ... Dhuhr
14:35 ... Asr
17:23 ... Maghreb
18:40 ... 'Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifels, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terresse Church Tel. 623666
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 635432
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 654328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675591
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
A depression will affect the Kingdom resulting in rainfall in all parts of the country. So temperatures will significantly drop, and winds will be southerly active. In Aqaba it will partly cloudy with a chance of showers with winds northerly moderate becoming westerly, and seas rough.
Min./Max. temp. 4/10
Amman 9/19
Dorsets 4/12
Jordan Valley 8/18

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 12, Aqaba 21 Humidity readings: Amman 60 per cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS
NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Mukhlis Mazabra 620425
Dr. Nasser Ibrahim 831039
Dr. Mohammad Al Izzah 752971
Dr. Mohammad Al Nakawi 819213
Firdous pharmacy 661912
Al Aqaba pharmacy 673055
Nairookh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairookh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 647632
IRBID:
Dr. Mohammad Al Zu'bi (—)
Alquds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Yousof Harzallah 988075
Khalidh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate: Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS
AMMAN:
Hussien Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6
Abdali Maternity, J. Amn. 644241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642302
Mathas, J. Amman 626140
Palestine, Shmeisani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musharraf Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/77
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 75111/26
Al-Nasr Hospital 891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674135
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)905060
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)909790
IRBID:
Princess Beama Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)27275
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital (02)274100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
09:15 ... Bangkok (RJ)
09:40 ... Aqaba (RJ)
09:50 ... Jeddah (RJ)
09:55 ... Doha, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:00 ... Beirut (RJ)
10:20 ... Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:30 ... Larnaca, Damascus (RJ)
11:45 ... New York (add) (RJ)
16:45 ... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
16:55 ... Cairo (RJ)
17:00 ... Paris (RJ)
17:55 ... London (RJ)
18:40 ... Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
20:35 ... Athens (RJ)
19:50 ... Vienna (RJ)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
09:30 ... Aqaba (RJ)
10:00 ... Beirut (RJ)
09:25 ... Frankfurt (RJ)
10:50 ... Vienna (RJ)
11:00 ... Rome (RJ)
11:15 ... Aqaba, Vienna (RJ)
11:30 ... Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
21:25 ... Athens (RJ)
12:45 ... Cairo (RJ)
13:45 ... Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
20:00 ... Riyadh (RJ)
21:15 ... Aqaba (RJ)
21:25 ... New Delhi (RJ)
21:30 ... Damascus (RJ)
21:30 ... Abu Dhabi Doha (RJ)
21:45 ... Jeddah (RJ)
22:05 ... Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
22:30 ... Athens (RJ)
22:45 ... Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
11:00 ... Damascus (AZ)
12:25 ... Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
14:25 ... Moscow (SU)
19:40 ... Larnaca (CY)
19:45 ... Beirut (ME)
20:05 ... Cairo (MS)
22:30 ... Istanbul (TA)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
12:10 ... Rome (AZ)
13:30 ... Doha, Bahrain (GF)
16:05 ... Moscow (SU)
20:25 ... Larnaca (CY)
20:55 ... Cairo (MS)

MARKET PRICES
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple 650
Banana (Mukammal) 680
Cabbage 620
Carrot 170/100
Cauliflower 90/50
Cucumber (large) 250/180
Cucumbers (small) 150/100
Eggplant 160/80
Garlic 900/700
Orange (large) 200/120
Green beans 700/600
Lemon 160/100
Marrow (large) 140/80
Marrow (small) 240/180
Olives (green) 700/500
Orange 350/300
Onion (dry) 220/150
Onion (green) 220/150
Pepper (hot) 240/180
Pepper (sweet) 250/200
Potato 120/80
Radish 160/90
Spinach 120/60
String beans 640/500



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday receives Juergen Moellmann, a member of the Federal Parliament of Germany and President of the German-Arab Friendship Society (Petra photo)

King reviews Mideast peace process with visiting German parliamentarian

AMMAN (J.T.) — Juergen Moellmann, member of the Federal Parliament of Germany and president of the German-Arab Friendship Society Saturday received by His Majesty King Hussein, with whom he discussed developments in the Middle East peace process.

During the audience, which was attended by German Ambassador to Jordan Heinrich Reimers, discussion also covered Jordanian-German relations.

Mr Moellmann was also received Saturday by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali.

Mr. Moellmann, who arrived in Amman Friday on a two-day visit, discussed German-Jordanian relations and German and European Union (EU) economic, political and financial aid to Jordan, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The German official also met with Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Taber Masri to discuss Middle East developments and German-Jordanian relations.

After the meetings, Mr. Moellmann visited the University of Jordan and met with President Fawzi Gharaibeh and delivered a lecture on the prospects of Middle East peace.

He also discussed with Dr. Gharaibeh cooperation between Germany and Jordan in educational fields.

According to German embassy sources, Mr. Moellmann is leaving for the West Bank town of Jericho and later to Cairo Monday on the next leg of his current tour of the region.

Amman municipality to build pedestrian, vehicle tunnels

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Amman Municipality will build a pedestrian tunnel at a point on the Amman-Madaba road near the town of Jawa during Ramadan, according to Amman Mayor Mamdouh Al Abbadi.

Dr. Abbadi told the Jordan Times Saturday that the tunnel was necessary to help students from two schools on both sides of the main road to cross safely on their way to school and back.

Several road accidents occurred at the site and school students were the primary victims, added the mayor.

The 48-metre long tunnel would be built in the same style as those constructed last year on the University of Jordan road in order to stem fatalities and injuries, Dr. Abbadi said.

He said the tunnel would cost less than JD 80,000.

Dr. Abbadi said that the municipality has now awarded a JD 300,000 tender to a local firm working in conjunction with a foreign consultancy group to conduct a feasibility study on opening a tunnel linking Wadi Hadadeh Street with King Hussein Street.

The project, expected to cost JD 3 million, entails the drilling of a 200 by 30-metre tunnel for vehicles at a depth of 200 metres under the mountain where the Citadel is located, said Dr. Abbadi.

The tunnel would open on King Hussein street near the Palace of Justice, he added.

Dr. Abbadi said that the study will be completed by June and the municipality plans to award a tender to a local firm working in cooperation with a foreign construction company to start the tunnel later this year.

He said the Amman tunnel should reduce traffic congestion in downtown and the distance cars now cover to cross from one point to another. It should also help motorists avoid the town centre which is often congested, Dr. Abbadi added.

As planned, the project could be finished in one year, he said.

Dr. Abbadi said that by constructing tunnels rather than bridges the municipality is working to protect the aesthetic nature of the capital and its topography, while reducing traffic problems, especially with the increasing number of vehicles in the city.

Princess Basma launches charity campaign

MAFRAQ (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Saturday opened this year's charity campaign by visiting Mafraq Governorate and distributing in-kind aid to needy families.

Princess Basma is honorary chairperson of the board of trustees of the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) which is undertaking the charity campaign, the fourth to be held annually in Jordan.

The Princess supervised the distribution of an assortment of supplies to residents of Koum Al Raf and Ramlet Al Amir Gbazi in the Sabha and Subhieh district near Mafraq.

The residents expressed their readiness to join in the efforts aimed at developing their regions and launching vocational training programmes.

A total of 800 needy families benefited from Saturday's distributions within the

Mafraq region.

The Princess opened a health centre at Ramlet Al Amir Gbazi and visited a school where she met with a group of women to discuss vocational training programmes.

She said the QAF would pursue efforts to help provide training to women in rural regions and help women's groups market their products.

Meanwhile reports from various governorates said that hundreds of scouts and school children and youth clubs will be taking part in the fund-raising campaign to finance projects and give aid to the needy.

Some of the campaigns such as those in South Shuneh and Ma'an will start Monday.

In Salt, Governor Eid Qatameh set up several committees to take charge of the fund-raising programmes.



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Saturday launches the 4th charity campaign with a visit to Mafraq Governorate (Petra photo)

Ministry clamps down on butchery violations

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Supply Saturday again called on the public to cooperate with ministry inspection teams and report any violations by butchers of meat-selling regulations.

A ministry statement announced the seizure of unspecified quantities of meat at three Amman stores whose owners, the statement alleged, were trying to sell thawed frozen meats as fresh meat, which is a violation.

All the meat seized has been destroyed by ministry inspectors, noted the statement.

It said the ministry was referring the violators to court.

The seizure of the frozen meat was the second such incident this week, according to the statement.

On Friday ministry inspectors seized quantities of frozen meat which, they said, was being used for sale as fresh to customers.

The inspectors have closed down and sealed the butchery where the meat was found, added the statement.

Before the start of the fast month of Ramadan, the ministry announced it had made ample provisions of meat, noting that butchers were divided into three categories: those selling fresh imported meat, butchers selling imported frozen meat and those selling local fresh meat.

At the same time, the ministry said its warehouses were selling frozen poultry meat to ensure sufficient amounts in the market during Ramadan.

Probe into blasts, plots narrows

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Investigators have narrowed down to two or three groups those who are believed responsible for the recent bomb explosions, hold-ups and plots to destabilise Jordan, informed sources said Saturday.

The sources would not identify any of the suspected groups saying it might jeopardise the inquiries. However, they revealed that investigation had led to singling out "two or three groups" and that the focus of the probe, "at this point in time," was on "less than 20 people."

Interior Minister Salameh Hammad told the Lower House of Parliament on Wednesday, shortly after a bomb scare in downtown Amman's Hashemiyeh Square, that security forces arrested a group or several groups who were plotting to destabilise Jordan.

The group(s) planned to "assassinate Jordanian intellectuals and businessmen..." and to bomb public places such as the Parliament building, cinemas, nightclubs, video rental shops and attack security personnel to grab their weapons, Mr. Hammad said without identifying the group(s).

Also targeted were banks because the plotters believed them to be "usurious" the minister said.

The sources who spoke to the Jordan Times said dozens of people were questioned following the Jan. 26 and Feb. 2 explosions at two moviehouses screening soft-porn films and others were picked up on information revealed by some of those questioned.

"A definite pattern of plots has emerged," said one source. "The questioning has led to some of the suspects confessing to having committed some crimes or having plotted crimes. Some of the people that the authorities would like to question remain missing, however."

"The security authorities will reveal the findings of their inquiries as soon as they prepare their cases to be referred to the state security court," said the sources without elaboration.

The sources refused to say whether the suspected "groups" had foreign links or were operating under the instructions of a single party. One source would only say: "(We have to) wait for the findings of the inquiries."

The disclosure that the cases would be referred to the state security court implied that the crimes would be treated and tried as capital offences and as threats to national security.

The nature of the plots as described by Mr. Hammad indicated that religious extremists were behind them. The last time Jordan witnessed extremist attacks by an organised group was when an underground group calling itself "Jish Mohammad (Mohammad's Army)" staged a series of attacks on public places and security officers in 1990 and 1991.

In 1992, 18 members of the group were found guilty of carrying out or plotting attacks against security officers, senior government officials, state buildings and foreign diplomats as well as liquor stores and nightclubs.

Eight of them, including two in absentia, were sentenced to death. The death sentences, except those on the two at large, were commuted to life terms by His Majesty King Hussein.

"Jish Mohammad" is believed to comprise mostly of Jordanian volunteers who fought with the Afghan rebels and returned home after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1990. They are said to be hardliners who oppose any interaction with the mainstream political life in the Kingdom.

A suspect who reportedly confessed to have planted the bomb that exploded at Zarga's Salwa movie house has been quoted as saying that he was persuaded to commit the crime, which cost him his legs, by a man who had frequently visited Afghanistan.

Police search for burglars in Salt

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Two houses in Salt and one in Irbid were burglarised during the weekend, police reports said.

In Salt a woman Friday reported to police that her house was burglarised while she was away visiting her family in Amman.

A.H.F. told police that when she returned home she discovered that someone had entered her house by breaking through one of its windows. She reported that her jewellery was missing.

Preliminary police investigations found finger prints which indicated that the burglars entered and exited the house from the window they had broken.

Also in Salt Friday, a 35-year-old man reported a burglary to police.

Mohammad H. told police he returned home after a short visit Friday to a friend's and noticed that someone had entered his house.

He said the burglars stole some money and jewellery he had left in his house.

The report indicated that the burglars entered the home by breaking a window. In Irbid, a 72-year-old woman also Friday reported to police that when she returned to her house she noticed that the kitchen door was open and everything in the house had been rummaged through. She also discovered that her jewellery was missing along with some watches and other valuables she kept in the house.

In Karak police Friday detained two young males aged 22 and 20, and are searching for a third man, after they allegedly entered a Karak home and stole some money in the presence of the homeowners, according to police reports.

One of the residents told police that three unidentified men came to the house and convinced the occupants that they were officials. The three then attacked the residents and tried to steal money from them.

A fight erupted between the residents and the intruders, and one of the residents was slightly injured, the report said.

The robbers escaped with the money.

Police investigations led them to two suspects. A search is on for the third robber who, police said, is known to them.

Italian archaeology institute signs cooperation agreement with Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Turin-based Italian Institute of Archaeology Saturday signed an agreement on technical and scientific cooperation with Jordan primarily to restore archaeological sites in the Kingdom.

Institute Director Giorgio Gullini signed the agreement with Department of Antiquities Director General Safwan Tell and University of Jordan President Fawzi Gharaibeh at a ceremony attended by Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mohammad Adwan and Italian Ambassador to Jordan Romualdo Bettini.

Under the agreement, the Italian institute undertakes the task of conducting restoration work at several archaeological sites including those in Jerash, Madaba and Petra through the Italian Archaeological Centre in Amman.

Also the institute will arrange lectures by its members and professors for Department of Antiquities officials and graduate students at the University of Jordan.

The lectures will focus on the history of antiquities and related topics, according to the agreement which was signed at the Department of Antiquities.



University of Jordan President Fawzi Gharaibeh (left), Department of Antiquities Director General Safwan Tell (centre) and Italian Institute of Archaeology Director Giorgio Gullini Saturday sign a technical and scientific cooperation agreement (Petra photo)

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

- Mrs. Juppe visits Jerash**
AMMAN (Petra) — Mrs. Juppe, wife of visiting French Minister of Foreign Affairs Alain Juppe, Saturday visited the archaeological site of Jerash. She was accompanied by Mrs. Majali, wife of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and members of the French embassy staff. She was briefed on the history of the site by local officials.
- Royal Court announces new press secretary**
AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Court's International Press Office (IPO) yesterday announced that effective Feb. 11, 1994, the IPO will be headed by Ms. Suad Imad Khalaf who will be replacing Ms. Vera Azar as His Majesty King Hussein's and Her Majesty Queen Noor's press secretary. The office handles all international interview requests for Their Majesties.
- Infant powdered milk prices cut**
AMMAN (Petra) — Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas Saturday announced price reductions on 12 types of infant powdered milk. The Ministry of Health, which circulated the minister's directives to pharmacies, did not publish the new rates. The ministry Saturday also said it has expanded the facilities of Eiman Hospital in Ajloun to accommodate 100 beds. The hospital is served by 30 doctors, up from five at the time when it was bought from the private sector three years ago, said a statement. Furthermore, the hospital has added new sections including paediatric, orthopaedic and surgery units and is cooperating with Princess Basma Hospital in Irbid to set up specialised clinics for outpatients.
- Princess Sarvath College to train teachers**
AMMAN (Petra) — The Princess Sarvath College Saturday signed an agreement with the Ministry of Education whereby the college will provide training to ministry-employed teachers in helping students overcome learning difficulties. According to Deputy Prime Minister Saeed Tell, who is also deputy chairman of the college board of trustees, tens of thousands of students suffer from learning disabilities. Dr. Tell signed the agreement for the college and Minister of Education Khaled Al Omari signed for the ministry.
- Judge heads for talks in Cairo**
AMMAN (Petra) — Member of the Higher Court of Justice judge Fahd Abul Eithem Saturday left for Cairo to take part in a meeting of the pan-Arab committee charged with drawing up of an Arab treaty to deter extremist and terrorist acts in the Arab World. The committee, set up by the Arab League ministers of justice in April last year, groups members from eight Arab states.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Photo exhibition entitled "To Be Or Not To Be — Industry Destroys Nature" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition entitled "Selections from the Artistic Works of Terra Sancta High School Students" at Amman National University (Salt Road).
- ★ Wood carving exhibition by artist Samer Ousama at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Iraqi artists at Ab'ad Art Gallery — Mecca Street.
- ★ Art and photo exhibition by several Arab artists at the Balqa Art Gallery (Tel. 720902).
- ★ Exhibition by Lebanese artist Hussein Madi at Darat Al Fann of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists. (Tel. 643251).
- ★ Art exhibition by several Iraqi and Jordanian artists at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).

SEMINAR

- ★ Seminar entitled "Conditions For Renaissance" by Mr. Amia Nayef Dhyab at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:30 p.m.

FILM

- ★ Film entitled "Lethal Weapon" at the American Centre at 2:30 p.m. (110 minutes).

Damascus rejects Israeli call

(Continued from page 1)

agreement was met with a wave of anger in the occupied territories because it was a new catastrophe to Palestinians on top of the Oslo catastrophe, the newspaper said.

Syria opposed the PLO-Israeli agreement on limited Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho which was signed in Washington last September following secret negotiations in the Norwegian capital.

But it said later the agreement was a first step which should be followed by other measures to achieve a comprehensive peace in the region.

"The Cairo accord had endorsed Israel's full control on all crossing points, gave Israel full freedom to chase and monitor Palestinians, deploy its forces in any place... and made it clear that occupation in all its forms would remain," Tishreen said.

"That is why Israel welcomed the deal and considered it a big accomplishment."

Tishreen said Israel's insistence on such a deal "proved that Israel did not want a just and comprehensive peace and did not want to return the occupied land to its owners."

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

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Settlements vs. dollars

THE RECENT decision of the Clinton administration to penalise Israel by deducting \$437 million from this year's U.S. loan guarantees because of its illegal settlement activity in the occupied Arab territories appears to be less serious than it really is. What this penalty means in the final analysis is that instead of the full \$2 billion in U.S. guarantees Israel would receive in 1994, it can now expect a maximum of \$1.563 billion.

On the surface of things, Washington's "punitive" move is predicated on its appraisal of Israeli spending on settlements in 1993 in excess of what was originally expected and agreed upon between the American and Israeli governments in 1992. The catch is that any penalty against continued Israeli building of settlements does not affect the \$3 billion a year aid package to Israel. Had the White House been really serious about punishing Israel for its illegal settlement activity in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, it would have opted to cut drastically its direct financial, economical and military support programmes to the Rabin government instead of relying solely on reducing its loan guarantees.

Still, the U.S.' reaction, ineffective as it may be, confirms Arab suspicions that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is still bent on populating Palestinian territories with Israeli settlers at a time when he pretends to be suing for peace with the Arab side, especially the Palestinians. This is the newest evidence yet that the Israeli pious pleas for a just and durable peace in the region are cynical and hypocritical at best. At the rate the Israeli colonisation programme is developing, there would not be much Palestinian territory left to talk about at the end of the 5-year transitional period.

This is where the U.S. can be expected to do more by way of frustrating the Israeli settlement plans by cutting deeply into its concrete aid to the Jewish state. It could be the only language that Rabin understands, given the failure of all other methods of persuasion.

What adds insult to injury, though, is the reaction of pro-Israel activists in Washington who have expressed their dismay at the announcement of the so-called penalty. Now Israel and its supporters are pinning hopes on the U.S. Congress to reverse the administration's decision. If congressmen end up accommodating Israeli lobbyists on this score, then there is no escape from the conclusion that what the executive branch in Washington offers in support of the peace process on the one hand, Capitol Hill readily takes away on the other.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily said that the Serbs are committing atrocities against the Bosnians because they are Muslims and in the name of Christianity. The Serbs are being supported in their acts by the Russians and the western nations which have been causing so much suffering to the Arab people in the Middle East, regardless of their faith said the daily. By fighting the Muslims, the Serbs are putting on a false Christian image since their acts, which are characterised by hatred and racism, do not reflect the true nature of Christianity. Those who are killing the Muslims in Bosnia are the same people who are committing atrocities against the Arab Christians and Muslims in our countries, continued the daily. Perhaps the Russians' open support of the Serbs has best exposed the ill intentions of the colonial powers who serve any excuse in order to achieve their selfish purposes, added the daily. At the same time, the world continues to hear lies coming from the western nations about their preparations to raid the Serbian positions to force them stop the war in Bosnia while these hiding Christians pursue their aggression against the Bosnian people, well-supplied with weapons from Russia and knowing well that the western nations are making sure that no arms reach the Muslims to defend themselves.

A C LUMINIST in Al Dustour Saturday drew a contrast between a statement by the health minister to Parliament about manipulations regarding the country's food and medicine on the one hand, and the interior minister's statement to Parliament about the danger inherent in the acts of sabotage, on the other. Taher Udwan said that both statements have had their effects on the public and also on the country's economy and tourism and investments. The writer said that in the case of the health minister, his statement was necessary to expose corruption and those behind it, but nonetheless his frankness dealt a blow to the economic and commercial life in the country. The same can be said about the interior minister's statement about the saboteurs, although his move was a democratic practice, added the writer. He said that the interior minister should have waited until the end of the investigations rather than declaring that the Kingdom is trajected by terrorists.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

Peace in the making — gains for Israel, concessions for Arabs

We are about to witness a peaceful solution to the Middle East crisis. There are indications that peace will be neither just nor acceptable to either our generation or the generations to come. It will be an imposed solution, which may be accepted by part of the Arab nation and the Palestinians, simply because the alternative under the circumstances is even worse.

Solutions now in circulation are all of a one-side nature, and so the peace process was progressing at the expense of one side's concessions. So far, not one agreed or recommended principle is equally applicable on both sides. The "rights" which will be recognised in favour of Israel are not met with the same rights on the Arab side, and the duties which will be placed on the back of the Arabs are not balanced by similar duties on behalf of Israel. This is the overall picture, but some examples should be given to substantiate the general picture.

Israel was very strict in its determination to maintain full authority on the border points between the Palestinian autonomous area and each of Jordan and Egypt. The sea port of Gaza and any airport that may be built inside the autonomy will also be under Israeli control. Mr. Rabin says that the purpose is to prevent Palestinian refugees from returning to their homeland. He says that openly, at a time when any Jew in the world is given the right to (return) to Israel and earn his or her citizenship upon stepping down from the airplane, even though he or she never lived in the Holy Land.

Israel is demanding the lifting of Arab boycott while saying nothing about Israeli economic boycott, where Jordanian products are not allowed to reach the West Bank market, let alone the Israeli market; and the Palestinian products are not allowed to reach the Israeli market, even though the whole economy of the West Bank and Gaza is not more than 4 per cent of the Israeli economy and cannot therefore pose a

serious risk. The Israeli product should be allowed to monopolise the West Bank market and have access to all Arab markets, provided the Israeli market remains protected, and the Israeli economy remains the most subsidised economy in the world.

Weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical and atomic bombs and missiles should not be allowed to proliferate in the Middle East under peace, but the Israeli mass destruction weapons are an exception, they have a (noble) objective to deter Arab (aggression) and to secure Israeli military edge over all Arab states combined.

National Security is very vital, but only for one side... the Israeli side. If the Golan Heights are overlooking Jaffa in the north of Israel, then Israel should keep the Golan Heights on security considerations. If the same heights are overlooking Damascus is not a problem. The fact that the Golan Heights are Syrian land is irrelevant. What counts is the Israeli national security, not the mutual security of both sides.

The Palestinian — Israeli declaration of principles calls for a joint committee to deal with common water of the West Bank, the committee will not be allowed to redevelop all common water. What Israel took belongs to Israel alone, and what remained with the Palestinians is negotiable!

At the time when Arab countries, surrounding Israel, are urged to reduce their military spending because military budget should be diverted to economic and social development, we see America supplying the Israeli army with the most modern and deadly fighters.

Not one solution or requirement is equally applicable to both sides. All gains are meant for Israel, all concessions should be made by the Arabs.

Homo Europeanus



By CHIAPPATTE in L'Espresso (L'Espresso, CAN, Sydney)

Tensions rise in southern Balkans as NATO prepares for strikes

By Stephen Weeks Reuter

ATHENS — A tinderbox combination of possible NATO air strikes against Serb gunners around Sarajevo and worsening relations between Greece and Macedonia is fuelling concern that conflict could spread to the southern Balkans.

During a week when NATO delivered its ultimatum for rebel Serbs to lift their 22-month siege of Sarajevo, a long-simmering dispute deteriorated sharply between Greece and the neighbouring former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia.

"Greece states there are limits to its patience and these are being exhausted," government spokesman Evangelos Venizelos told a news briefing on Friday.

Greece has called on the new republic to make concessions, including changing its constitution and national symbols, before Athens will return to U.N. talks to resolve a two-year dispute.

"We could be facing a long period of tension. There must be compromise by both sides to prevent this from becoming a flash point," said Theodore Kouloumbis of the Hellenic Institute for European and De-

fence Policy.

But compromise appeared more distant after the United States recognised the new state this week, prompting joy on one side of the border and deep anger on the other.

Washington, which has peacekeeping troops in the new republic, was following the lead of Greece's main European Union partners, which recognised the new state in December.

After U.S. recognition, Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu issued a stiff warning that "Greece can isolate this republic economically... which means that this country will collapse."

The republic is dependent on the Greek port of Salonika. Athens has maintained a veiled threat to close the border and access to Salonika to force the republic to accept its demands.

It seems that Skopje (as Greece calls the state) does not understand the particular and unique importance which normalisation of relations has for it," Mr. Venizelos said.

Greece's Socialist government has said it has a range of options ready to put pressure on the most southern of the republics in what used to be Yugoslavia but it refuses to give details until it decides to act.

Hours after Mr. Papandreu's warning of economic strangulation, he seemed to slam the door on resuming U.N. talks on the feud after hearing that Macedonia had rejected his conditions for dialogue.

He said that if officials from it had been accurately quoted, "they mark the end of dialogue". Special envoy Cyrus Vance has tried since October to restart the stalled U.N. talks.

Mr. Kouloumbis said: "I am clearly much less optimistic today than I was yesterday."

The row between Greece and its neighbour has destabilised the southern Balkans since 1991 and all efforts by the EU and U.N. to work out a solution have failed.

Most of Greece's allies have pushed to recognise the state of two million Slavs and Ethnic Albanians. They argue its large Albanian population and big neighbours make it easy prey in the turbulent Balkans.

But several diplomats said they felt a real danger was that Greece was increasingly isolated from its EU partners and NATO allies in the dispute and over Balkan policies in general.

"What we don't want is Papandreu, who is well known for his unpredictable

moves and populist grandstanding, to do something irrational because he feels cornered," a western diplomat said.

Mr. Papandreu irritated his allies with his outspoken views and maverick moves while in power from 1981 to 1989. He was elected prime minister again last October.

He blasted the EU, NATO and the United States on Thursday and disassociated Greece from a decision to blast Serb gunners if necessary to lift the siege of Sarajevo.

He called NATO backing for air strikes a "very unfortunate, totally wrong and guilty decision" and he was unlikely to have pleased EU partners by blaming them for the Bosnian crisis.

"Whose responsibility is it that we have such a crisis?" he asked. It is, unfortunately, the European Union.

Mr. Papandreu said the EU blundered by agreeing to recognise Bosnia in December 1991, sparking a civil war, and it was about to blunder again with military intervention.

"What are the chances that we will spread the war (with military intervention)?" he asked. "I don't want to be more specific but the possibilities of the war spreading exist."

200,000 ex-Soviet Jews avoid Israel

TWO HUNDRED thousand Jews from the former Soviet Union have emigrated to countries other than Israel since the start of the wave of Jewish emigration from the ex-USSR in 1989.

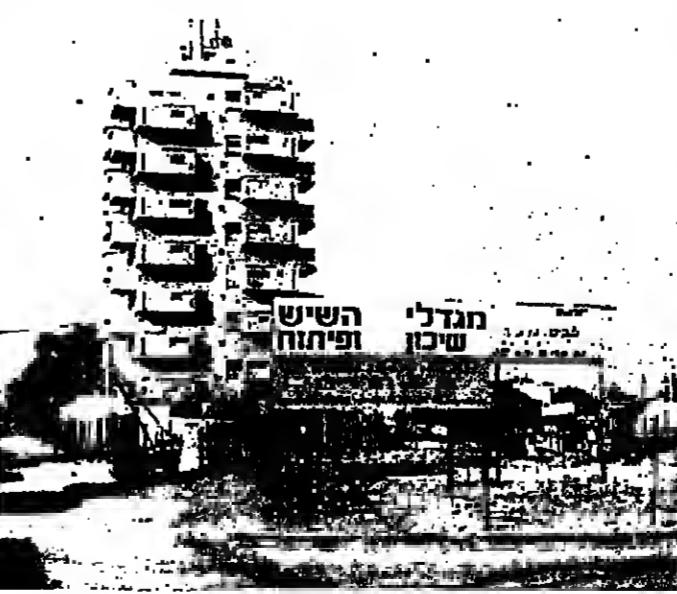
Citing Uri Gordon, the head of the Jewish Agency's immigration department, the Jerusalem Post said that the vast majority — 160,000 — went to the United States. They went there with assistance from non-Zionist organisations and from the communities in which they settled, said Mr. Gordon. The others mainly chose to live in Germany, Canada and Britain.

Speaking in Moscow at a conference of Israeli consuls, Mr. Gordon said that immigration to Israel from the CIS has been stable in the past year. While there had been increased emigration from Ukraine and Belarus, the numbers coming from Russia had declined.

He attributed the fall in the numbers coming to Israel to a perception by prospective immigrants that the Israeli government was doing little to help them "despite objective data which show that there has been a considerable improvement in the absorption process."

Mr. Gordon expressed hope that the election results in Russia, in which extreme right wingers performed strongly, would give a push to "those Jews who are sitting on their suitcases."

Interest in emigrating to Israel has indeed increased since the elections, Haim Chesler, head of Jewish Agency activities in the CIS, was quoted as saying. The Jerusalem Post said that "emissaries throughout the European cities and towns of the Russian republic have reported growing interest among prospective olim (immigrants) who cited



A lone apartment tower in Beersheba awaits a building boom that has yet to happen (File photo)

fear of fascism as their reason for wanting to emigrate". Mr. Chesler added, however, that this has yet to be translated

Gaza's graffiti artists turn less anti and more pro

By David Hoffman

GAZA CITY, Israeli-Occupied Gaza Strip — With delicate brush strokes, Maysara Baroud gave life to the illustration of a snake wrapping around an olive tree in pursuit of an eagle.

What was unusual about Mr. Baroud's painting was not the familiar symbols of Palestinian nationalism, including the checkered kaffiyeh scarf on the wings of the eagle and the minarets of Jerusalem in the distance. What made this painting stand out was its location.

Mr. Baroud's gallery is the sandy streets of the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip, his canvas the side of a friend's cinder-block house. His admirers are the neighbourhood youths who gather at his feet.

Mr. Baroud, 18, is among a new genre of Palestinian street painters who have emerged since the peace accord was signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation on Sept. 13. Suddenly, the walls of Gaza are blooming with caricatures and colourful murals.

More significant, the tone of their work is becoming somewhat less antagonistic towards Israel and more celebratory. There are still illustrations of Kalashnikovs and knives, but the walls are now filling with slogans extolling Palestinian leaders and organisations.

Although Mr. Baroud portrayed Israel as a snake in his last painting, he said that as soon as Israeli soldiers begin pulling out of Gaza, "I will draw a picture for kids to tell them the era of stones is over."

The walls of Gaza are the Palestinians' version of a news ticker tape, Gaza has no local daily newspaper, and the Ara-

bic papers from Jerusalem that circulate here are censored by Israel. So the walls are a media outlet — what some Palestinians call a "newspaper without censorship."

Ossama Ali Issa, a tailor by hobby, was gazing out the window of a Gaza taxi recently as the endless, flowery graffiti whizzed by. On one wall, the freshly painted word "Palestine" in Arabic turned into a boat, with an automatic rifle as the mast.

"Anybody can do that," Mr. Ali Issa, 28, said with a grimace. "Anyone can write graffiti, even with spelling mistakes. But painting, only the artist can do it. And a good picture, like a caricature, needs no further comment."

The art also reflects volatile public opinion. The Palestinian's mood soared after the peace agreement but has since plummeted as Israel's withdrawal has been delayed. Grand tributes to the PLO chairman, Yasser Arafat, have been defaced in some neighbourhoods.

What is surprising about the street artists is that most are not young firebrands, but dedicated artists, not the type to be slipping out in the night in masks, with cans of spray paint.

Fayez A. Sirsawi, director of an art programme at the Gaza YMCA, said the political struggle often overwhelmed artists, especially the young. Before and during the intifada, he said, "art was provocative and fulfilled political ideas." He added: "But after the peace agreement, you could feel the change. We looked at the walls, and we found they were more optimistic than before." — Washington Post.

Seeking a fair solution based on Bosnian analysis

By Stephen S. Rosenfeld

WASHINGTON — Out in the country, where he goes to speak monthly, Secretary of State Warren Christopher finds that no one asks about Bosnia anymore. Nor is it or any other regional dispute among his own "strategic priorities" — economic security, Russia, Europe and NATO, Asia, the Middle East and non-proliferation.

Yet he is conducting in Bosnia a salient test of the new diplomacy of high gesture and low commitment that global change and shrinking resources now force upon the American approach to much world disorder.

For some time the drift of American thinking has been to regard the Muslim-led government of Bosnia as the war's chief victim and to resist by diplomatic means the forced imposition of a settlement on it. With international negotiators now nearing such a settlement, Washington has distanced itself, creating a small pocket of political space in which the militarily revived Muslims can fight on. This has produced a sharp dispute with the Europeans. They wish to stop the fighting with minimal further costs (refugees, casualties, budget, commerce, nerves, escalation) to themselves.

It is not strange to form a separate American policy towards what the United States has termed a "European problem"? Bosnia is not "European" in a humanitarian sense, notes Mr. Christopher in an interview, citing the huge American aid contribution. Nor in the importance of containing the conflict. Nor do Europeans claim the problem is strictly theirs: They are desperate for an American role and they are getting one, though it is not to put the screws on the Muslims.

Some Americans believe that Washington should give the Muslims the boost of lifting on its own the United Nations arms embargo. The embargo keeps Muslims, despite recent acquisitions, inferior to Croats and especially to Serbs in battlefield arms. But here Mr. Christopher acknowledges a telling check on American flexibility: The embargo operates very unfairly, but least of all on a resolution the United States voted for does it wish to set an

example of picking and choosing among U.N. resolutions — an example others might apply to, say, Iraq or Haiti.

If things go well for the Muslims on the battlefield, then a complicated U.S. calculus opens. The American government does not want to take on the responsibility of instructing Muslims how far to go or when to stop. But the secretary hopes they will come to a steady view of their territorial requirements and not move the goalposts — nor bite off more than they can chew.

Things could also go badly for the Muslims on the battlefield if the latest reported incursions by Serbia's and Croatia's regular forces meet success. Then another calculus of American diplomacy takes hold. One part of it is to convey credible warnings of economic and political penalty to Serbia and Croatia. A second is to help the Bosnians to an understanding that this struggle must finally end at the conference table.

Mr. Christopher is aware that any political settlement in Bosnia must reflect the power balance established on the battlefield. He accepts that in the Balkans, memories are long, angels few and political deals vulnerable to revision. But he judges that there is a better chance a settlement may stick if it is based on Bosnia's own analysis, not in the first instance the European Union's, of what the traffic will bear.

An active international military role in Bosnia remains a remote prospect, most people feel, even if a few token air strikes are eventually made. So the prime international lever remains sanctions. Mr. Christopher understands that the neighbouring countries are weary. He is open to measures that would lighten their burden but keep some leverage available against Serbia and Croatia. The purpose would be to support the Muslims in Bosnia, to address the Serbian occupation of parts of Croatia and to stiffen the threat of war-crimes prosecutions all around.

He is sensitive to the criticism, notably from the French, that acting even indirectly to prolong the war is not "moral." The secretary does not much like the word. Ever the lawyer, he prefers a standard of fairness. — The Washington Post.

Features

Juppe reiterates French stand

(Continued from page 1)

Zagreb and Sarajevo was aimed at "relaying this message clearly... that we are determined to impose respect for this warning."

The NATO threatened Wednesday to order air strikes

against Serb artillery encircling Sarajevo unless the weapons were withdrawn or placed under U.N. control by Feb. 21.

The threat was prompted by last week's mortar attack on a Sarajevo market which killed 68 people — the worst single atrocity of the 22-month Bosnian civil war.

Arafat expects final deal

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Peres, meanwhile, suggested that a small Jewish settlement in the occupied Gaza Strip was no longer viable and might one day be dismantled.

With his remarks broadcast Saturday on Israel Radio, Mr. Peres became the most senior figure in the Rabin government to raise questions about the future of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

It has been Israel's position in the negotiations with the Palestinians that none of the 144 Jewish settlements would be uprooted during the five-year period of Palestinian autonomy.

Mr. Peres, asked whether he would in principle support the dismantling of settlements in Gaza, said such a decision should not be made "under the pressure of the negotiations."

(But) I certainly have ques-

tions that need to be asked out loud," he said in the radio interview. "What really is the logic of maintaining a settlement of 28 families who basically need workers from Thailand, who need an army unit to defend them?" Mr. Peres said.

"Where is the logic here?" Mr. Peres rejected settler claims that their presence improves security by forcing troops to patrol in the area.

"I'm asking, what business does the army have there?" Mr. Peres asked. "We have decided the army wouldn't be Gaza's policeman."

Former Health Minister Haim Ramon, a leading dove in Mr. Rabin's Labour Party, told reporters last year that Israel might have to decide whether to evacuate small, isolated settlements that would be stranded under Palestinian autonomy. Mr. Ramon said this would be an Israeli decision, not part of the negotiations.

Amman awaits word on Yemeni pact

(Continued from page 1)

when Mr. Beidh left the Yemeni capital Sanaa for South Yemen's capital Aden on Aug. 19 where he remains until now.

The crisis resulted from differences of opinion on the pace of the union as well as economic and social reform.

In elections held last April, Mr. Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) and Mr. Beidh's Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) emerged as the two dominant parties and agreed to form a coalition government headed by Mr. Saleh as presi-

dent and Mr. Beidh as vice-president. The Islamic Al Islah party was later invited to the coalition.

But political differences emerged thereafter, with Mr. Beidh accusing Mr. Saleh and his GPC of trying to dominate the country and running an elimination campaign against southern leaders.

The reconciliation accord drawn up last week envisages political and economic reforms demanded by Mr. Beidh and accepted by Mr. Saleh.

Cabinet endorses sales tax law

(Continued from page 1)

terest groups such as the chambers of industries and commerce as well as the banking sector.

Mr. Gammoh has said the sales tax law was part of a comprehensive plan to revamp the taxation structure in Jordan and that the government would be introducing the plan later this year.

Ceasefire holds in Sarajevo

(Continued from page 1)

war, is beefing up its air forces in Italy in preparation for possible strikes in Bosnia.

The United States, Britain, France, the Netherlands and Turkey are either sending extra strike aircraft to Italy or returning planes which had been deployed there previously.

The NATO planes, some of which are based on aircraft carriers in the Adriatic, may be used to hit Serb artillery around Sarajevo and could also have to protect lightly-armed U.N. peacekeeping troops in Bosnia.

Military sources said the reinforcements were intended to ensure that there was sufficient firepower to support U.N. forces on the ground if they were attacked in retaliation for allied air strikes.

A total of about 170 NATO fighters, bombers and ground attack aircraft will be within reach of Sarajevo or other enclaves in Bosnia in less than 15 minutes.

Russia on Saturday tempered its opposition to NATO air strikes against Bosnian Serbs, with Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev warning that such attacks should only go ahead in response to a request from U.N. peacekeepers on the ground.

The NATO ultimatum "is in line with U.N. Security Council resolutions that call on regional organisations to protect the blue helmets in Bosnia," Mr. Kozyrev was quoted as saying by Interfax.

The foreign minister added that Russia took a "cautious view" of the idea of air strikes, but acknowledged that they may be used to defend U.N. peacekeeping forces in Bosnia, if this is requested by these forces.

Mr. Kozyrev's comments marked a considerable shift in line from the Foreign Ministry's earlier statement condemning the NATO ultimatum as "an invalid decision taken outside the framework" of the U.N.

In Bonn, the vice-president of Bosnia's Muslim-led government said in an interview released Saturday that the Bosnian civil war would spread if NATO failed to force Serbs to lift their siege of Sarajevo.

"If NATO wastes its chance, the war will widen out. We will begin a guerrilla war and stake everything on one card," Eijap Ganie told the news weekly Der Spiegel.

"Perhaps then the Turkish army will help us. The Islamic countries have offered their support several times."

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said his government guaranteed foreigners' safety on its territory but could lose control of its own people if NATO carried out air strikes.

"If we are in full control of the situation we can fully guarantee the safety of aid workers in (the self-proclaimed) Republic of Serbska."

He added: "But if there are going to be air strikes we may lose some control."

"We would never give such an order to harm foreigners in our country. But if they strike us then that's going to be chaos and this chaos may command many things we would never command," Mr. Karadzic said.

The foreign U.N. aid workers who were having trouble leaving Bosnia have reached Zagreb, a U.N. official said Saturday.

U.N. foreign workers in Banja Luka in northern Bosnia were denied permission to leave for Zagreb on Wednesday because they lacked a 48-hour pass required by authorities. The workers reached Zagreb Saturday, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) spokeswoman Sylvana Foa said in Geneva.

She described comments made by Bosnian Serb deputy military commander Milan Gvero on Wednesday to Tanjug news agency about stopping U.N. aid workers from leaving the country as a "rather frustrated" reaction to NATO threats of air strikes.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

Clues to evolution in an extraordinary family of fish

By Natalie Angier

BERKELEY, California —

The date is a dud and both parties know it. Yet as long as they are stuck with each other for a time they make a wretched effort to flirt. He lunges lazily towards her. She quivers gently in response. He flaps his tail against her. She flares her gills to show their provocative red undersides. He circles around, charges her again and tries to nip her, but now she's getting bored with the charade and moves away from him. Reacting likewise, he drifts off to the opposite end of the tank. For a few moments they are each lost in the inscrutable vastness of fish thought. And then it happens. The female opens her plump, sensuously curved lips into the widest, roundest, most perfect, least courteous gape of mouth that can be imagined: a fish yawn.

"The female doesn't seem very interested, does she?" said Suzanne Henson, a student carrying out an experiment on the mating habits of cichlid fish.

Sometimes, Ms. Henson said, when a female is put in a tank with a male, she becomes so excited that her genitals swell and she immediately grows heavy with eggs. For his part, an interested male is a violent male, behaving towards his potential mate with an abusiveness that looks like grounds for criminal charges.

"Once a male bit a female so hard I actually jumped," said Ms. Henson. "I could hear the sound of the crunch." But not today, and not with these two slugs. Their disastrous date is finished, the experiment over, and each is returned to its proper tank.

Ms. Henson works in the laboratory of Dr. George W. Barlow of the University of California at Berkeley, a leading authority on the great and wildly diverse group of animals

known as cichlid fish. She and others in the lab are studying the Midas cichlid, a beefy, square-jawed creature from Nicaragua that comes in two colour schemes, zebra-striped or gold — the last accounting for the species' name. Midas fish, like many other cichlids, are monogamous, and the researchers are seeking to understand the individual traits that inspire one Midas to choose another as its mate for life.

The question is part of a broader consideration of the sexual, social and feeding behaviours of cichlids, an extraordinary family of fish that many evolutionary biologists believe could help resolve the great puzzle of how species evolve and how diversity in nature arises from monotony.

More than 1,000 species of cichlid fish live in the lakes and rivers of Africa, Madagascar, India and Latin America. They are a highly successful tribe, frequently dominating their environment through a blend of intelligence — unusually high for a fish — and elaborate rituals of parental care. But what makes them so unusual is the number of species that often coexist in the same place.

More than 500 different varieties of cichlids swim in Lake Malawi, in southeast Africa, while about 200 other species live in Lake Tanganyika, in Tanzania. Some species are bigger than goats, others could fit in a thimble. Some are thick and boxy, others lean and long. They are brown or turquoise or every shade of a neon rainbow painted on a single beast.

And the cichlid's rate of speciation has been explosive. In Lake Victoria of East Africa, for example, 300 species of cichlids arose in less than 200,000 years, an evolutionary pace that no other animal group has rivaled. Certainly, none of the other fish groups found in the three African lakes has undergone anything



One of the more than 500 varieties of cichlids found in Lake Malawi

approaching the spectacular diversification managed by the cichlid family.

In the journal Trends in Ecology and Evolution, Dr. Axel Meyer, a molecular geneticist at the State University of New York at Stony Brook pulled together much of the recent molecular data on cichlid fish. The DNA work has confirmed previous results from the taxonomists that cichlids are monophyletic, that is, they all originate from a single ancestral fish that arose perhaps 120 million years ago, when India, Africa and Latin America were one giant conti-

nent. Since the breakup of the continents, the founder fish that were carried off to different regions of the planet have gone their own ways, speciating wildly in all cases yet by very distinctive genetic mechanisms from one lake or river to another.

In some instances, species of cichlid fish that look and behave radically differently from one another turn out to be almost identical genetically.

For example, Dr. Meyer compared the DNA of 14 Lake Victoria cichlid species, choosing fish with radically divergent feeding behaviours: a snail eater, a cichlid that feeds on its fellow cichlids, a cichlid that eats only the eyes of other cichlids, another that exclusively sucks young cichlid fry out of the protective mouths of their parents. Yet despite the fishes' specialised appetites, their genes differ from one another by a mere two or three bases, or chemical subunits, out of the many hundreds of bases that constitute the genes examined. "This genetic invariance was a very big surprise to us," said Dr. Meyer. "There's more variation among human populations that I had among my fish." And

humans, of course, are all members of the same species. The new work suggests that much of the success of the cichlid family could lie in its unusual degree of molecular flexibility, with minor differences in genes able to yield enormous disparities of comportment.

There's always a new amazing story when you study cichlids," said Dr. Meyer. "The standard idea in ecology is that there are various niches waiting to be filled, and species arise to fill them. But cichlids seem to create their own niches" — New York Times.

De Beers, Russia wage diamond war in Israel

By Jean-Luc Renaudie

Agence France Presse

TEL AVIV, Israel — Russia and the powerful Anglo-South African conglomerate De Beers have for months been waging a war over diamonds in Israel, the world's largest diamond-cutting centre, experts say.

The battleground is located in the two ultra-modern skyscrapers that house the diamond exchange in the Tel Aviv suburb of Ramat Gan.

The Russians, who produce a quarter of the world's uncut diamonds, have stepped up their black market sales in Israel.

Secret transactions worth \$40 million were recently carried out in Israel in violation of an agreement between Moscow and De Beers. A diamond expert who declined to be identified told AFP.

According to their agreement which expires in 1995, the "syndicate" As De Beers in known, can market 95 per cent of Russia's production with the remaining five per cent sold freely at auctions in Moscow.

"The Russians, who are in desperate need of hard currency and want to extract better terms from De Beers, have begun to secretly export diamonds," a senior diamond exchange official said.

"There have been black market sales, but of marginal quantities," said Exchange President Yizhak Forem.

"If the Russians offer stones at better prices and without middlemen, certain cutters may be tempted," added Zvi Shur, president of the Israeli Association of Diamond Producers.

Officially, the Jewish state last year imported only \$10 million worth of uncut Russian diamonds, said Industry and Trade Ministry official Hanan Bitelman.

Israel, which exported a record \$3 billion worth of cut diamonds in 1993, imported \$2.4 billion in uncut stones, with \$832 million of it from sales organised by De Beers in London and the remainder on the open market, notably in the Belgian city of Antwerp.

"This system has to date allowed us to ensure price stability. The Russians have no interest in flooding the market and triggering a collapse in

rates," said Moshe Schnitzer, president of the Israeli Diamond Institute.

"Amateurs will not want to spend several thousand dollars for a stone if they fear an upcoming plunge in the jewel's value," he explained.

Russia sits atop enormous supplies of diamonds, which if sold could destabilise the market.

Experts said Moscow may be storing two hundred million carats worth \$7 billion or the equivalent of more than a year's annual production internationally.

Alarmed by the threats of destabilisation, Mr. Forem and the heads of the Antwerp and New York diamond exchanges appealed to Moscow last month, in the name of the Executive Committee of Diamond Exchanges Worldwide, to halt the illicit trade.

"Last week in Tel Aviv we explained the dangers facing us to Iygeni Byshkov, director of the Russian State Committee for Precious Stones," Mr. Schnitzer said. "I'm convinced the Russians will be reasonable and reach an agreement with the syndicate."

Mr. Byshkov meanwhile announced the planned opening of a sales office in Ramat Gan.

"If the Russians respect the accord with the syndicate and wish to sell their surplus directly in Israel, they're welcome to do so," said Mr. Forem.

Nude picture ignites cultural war in Egypt

By Mona Eltahawy

Reuter

CAIRO — A Gustav Klimt nude of Adam and Eve on a magazine cover has ignited a cultural war in Egypt.

The turn of the century painting by the Vienna artist was the subject of a long parliamentary attack on Culture Minister Farouk Hosni that shocked intellectuals and sparked a debate on freedom of expression in an increasingly conservative environment.

Parliamentarian Galal Gharib told a rowdy assembly Mr. Hosni was responsible for the immorality of modern Egyptian culture and asked women members of parliament to leave so he could prove it.

The women stayed put and Mr. Gharib pointed to a photograph of the "offending" painting, which appeared on the cultural magazine "Creativity", and spoke of a play with homosexual characters as examples of what was culturally rotten in Egypt.

Mr. Gharib motioned a no-confidence vote against Mr. Hosni but Gamal Al Ghitani, editor-in-chief of the weekly "Culture news", wrote that the real target of the assault was Egyptian culture.

"Unless every owner of a pen or a brush and every innovator stands up to such attacks, no one will be able to write a word, compose a tune, or paint a colour," Mr. Ghitani warned.

Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfouz joined hundreds of prominent Egyptian writers in

signing a statement condemning what they considered Mr. Gharib's "cultural terrorism."

The furor in parliament has highlighted the fear of many intellectuals that the showdown between the government and Muslim militants fighting to overthrow it would spill over into cultural circles and dictate the boundaries of freedom.

Intellectuals often complain the government, accused by the Muslim fundamentalists of being Godless, was trying too hard to outdo the militants in religiosity by imposing a stricter Islamic line and censorship in movies and art work.

"I reject any authority outside the art world imposing restrictions. Today it may be Al Azhar (Egypt's primary Islamic institution), tomorrow it may be the army. Only an artist can be the source of judgement on art, not a religious, governmental or political entity," artist Adel Al Siwi told Reuters.

When a journalist for a cultural publication asked him recently if art was sinful, Mr. Siwi refused to answer, saying he was an artist, not a theologian.

Fundamentalists regard films and theatre as sinful because they show torrid love affairs, sex scenes and drinking and other behaviour deemed immoral. Militants have killed at least one writer and threatened many others for their secular views.

Many writers and intellectuals are on the militants' death list and have been under

tight government protection since the 1992 murder of secular writer Farag Foda, who was gunned down by militants for his anti-fundamentalist views.

British author Salman Rushdie, ordered killed by Iran's Islamic leader for his blasphemous novel "Satanic Verses", found a sympathetic ear among many Egyptian intellectuals who said his book should not be banned.

Intellectuals shake their heads in disbelief at a recent case in Egypt in which fundamentalist lawyers demanded an end to the happy marriage of secular academic Nasr Hamed Abu Zeid on the grounds that he has renounced Islam through his books.

The lawyers argued that Mr. Abu Zeid was an apostate and therefore his marriage to a Muslim woman was automatically annulled.

"This (Gharib's) barbaric attack, taking cover behind religion, is part of a plan aimed at destroying the Egyptian mind. Egypt's culture is its protection against outside influence," said writer Fatma Al Assal.

Other academics have stressed that nudity and erotica are not new to Egyptian culture but have been there from ancient Egyptian times and can even be found among the great works of Islamic literature.

"If the excuse of nudity was applied to everything then we would have to destroy most of the relics that we are proud of," wrote Mr. Ghitani.

Illustrating his point, the Brooklyn Museum opened an exhibit of ancient Egyptian relics in January that included a small painted limestone sculpture showing a woman having sex with six much smaller, grinning men.

Ibrahim Issa, writing in Rose Al Youssef magazine, reminded Mr. Gharib of Sheikh Al Nazzari's tome the "Perfumed garden", a medieval Islamic erotica manual on par with the Kama Sutra, an eastern work on the pleasure of sex.

Only Fahmi Howaidi, the sole pro-Islam

Economy

Hosokawa, Clinton harden positions on trade

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States and Japan appeared to be on a collision course on trade policy Saturday despite a friendly parting by President Clinton and Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa.

After the two leaders had breakfast in the family quarters of the White House, Mr. Hosokawa said at a news conference that Tokyo would not drop its resistance to "numerical targets" to pacify the Americans on trade.

"We will not modify our position in that regard," the Japanese leader said.

Mr. Clinton suggested U.S. retaliatory action could come quickly.

"We'll just have to examine that our next steps will be, and we'll be turning to that next week," he told reporters after a hill-signing ceremony in the Oval Office.

On Friday, the two sides failed to iron out their trade differences and came up with an agreement as planned, opening the door to possible retaliatory strikes by Washington.

Mr. Hosokawa said he hoped the Americans would in the long run take unilateral actions that would contravene international trade laws but said he was not frightened of a quick strike.

"I don't think the failure of an agreement will lead immediately to sanctions," Mr. Hosokawa said through a spokesman.

"If the United States wants to go ahead with sanctions, let the one Japanese diplomatic source said late Friday. "This is a transitional period and it will be rough, but it is necessary to create a more mature relationship."

The diplomat refused to be identified.

At a news conference after Friday's three-hour meeting, Mr. Clinton said a "period of reflection" was needed before negotiators meet again. Mr. Hosokawa agreed that "a little bit of cooling off" was necessary.

"We will try to cool down," Mr. Hosokawa told reporters who travelled with him from Tokyo. "But as to what we will do from now, I can't say at this point."

Mr. Hosokawa's statement mirrored that made earlier by Mr. Clinton at a joint news conference by the two leaders after their three-hour summit.

"I have no idea what will happen from here on in," Mr. Clinton said. "We just didn't make it."

"If Japan has further proposals, our door remains open," the president added. "But ultimately, Japan's market must be open."

Despite a last-gasp attempt to resolve problems that have existed since a framework agreement was signed last July, Mr. Clinton and Mr. Hosokawa failed to reach final accords called for in the pact. The accords are aimed at cutting Japan's giant trade surplus and improving access to its markets.

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Hosokawa said their failure to reach agreement should not be allowed to damage U.S.-Japan relations.

A U.S. official said "a full range of options" for opening Japan's markets would be reviewed promptly. He declined to be specific, but made it clear that the options include retaliation for trade practices deemed unfair.

Action could come as early as Tuesday when the United States is expected to complete a review of how open Japan's cellular telephone market is to foreign competition.

"We will proceed promptly, responsibly and carefully," the official said. "The status quo is unacceptable."

Sozaburo Okamatsu, the vice minister for international affairs at Japan's trade ministry said sanctions are equally unacceptable.

"I don't think that the United States would soon take sanctions, but if they did we would break off the framework pact and bring a case" before the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), he said.

Mr. Hosokawa made it clear that he, like Mr. Clinton, was prepared to accept no deal rather than be saddled with a bad one.

"In the past, Japan and the United States have sometimes reached ambiguous agreements which could gloss over the problems of the time only to find them to become sources of later misunderstandings," Mr. Hosokawa said at the news conference with Mr. Clinton.

"Now, I firmly believe that our relationship in this new era is maturing into a stage where each of us respects and has confidence in the judgment of the other, but at the same time, frankly admits what we can and cannot do, despite such best efforts," he added.

"Japan has, in recent years, sought a way to create more equal ties with the United States to replace the old pattern in which Japan traditionally caved in to U.S. threats at the last minutes," he elaborated.

"We didn't have an ambiguous agreement in which both sides could claim victory at home," Mr. Hosokawa said. "But one can evaluate positively the fact that the U.S.-Japan relationship was unshaken despite certain differences."

Japanese negotiator Koichiro Matsuura was blunt. "It was unfortunate that we couldn't pull together an agreement, but we could not give up our principles."

At the heart of the dispute is a U.S. demand for quantitative ways to measure progress in improving access to Japanese markets.

Washington says that a results-oriented approach is vital. Tokyo says it is managed trade and counter to Mr. Hosokawa's key economic platform of deregulation.

Without accords, the next step in suspended talks on Japan's car insurance and public procurement markets was uncertain. Those were the priority areas targeted for agreements by Friday's summit.

Japan's business leaders, bracing for U.S. retaliation after the failure of the White House trade summit, backed the government's tough line Saturday and urged Washington not to worsen an already tense situation.

At the same time, Trade Minister Hiroshi Kumagai called for cool heads and a renewed, sincere efforts to forge a compromise on the central issue — how to reduce Japan's huge, politically explosive, trade gap with the United States.

Speaking in the gloom aftermath of Friday's failed White House meeting between Mr. Clinton and Mr. Hosokawa, Mr. Kumagai told reporters in Tokyo:

"We must not leave the issue unresolved indefinitely. We should resume talks as soon as possible."

Kosaku Inaba, chairman of the Japan Federation of Commerce and Industry, recognized that U.S. retaliatory strikes could now be imminent. "I sincerely hope the U.S. will make a sound judgement and avoid retaliatory measures," he said.

Gaishi Hiraiwa, head of the Japan's biggest business group, Keidanren, reacted plegmatically to the breakdown. "This is the result of Japan's rigid resistance to the U.S. move to introduce something like managed trade. It can't be helped," he said in a statement.

Another top businessman, Chairman Takeshi Nagano of the Japan Federation of Employers Association, cited talks of U.S. trade retaliation or action to "talk up" the yen.

"Both would merely increase mutual distrust," he warned.

Trade Minister Kumagai said Saturday this effort at great frankness must continue. "The Japanese side should... make clear to the U.S. that Japan is doing its utmost to open its markets," he said.

"When there is a clash of interests, we should not make our position vague as before, but instead make efforts to find common ground while clarifying differences of views."

U.S.-based analysts said the president would lose much credibility if he failed to hit strongly at Japan this time.

Seen from Tokyo however, the outlook was not necessarily all black.

"The U.S. guys had to see the summit failing in order to garner the political capital that it gives them," said Tom Hill, strategist at S.G. Warburg Securities Japan.

Friday meeting about trade and other issues (AFP photo)

U.S. President Bill Clinton (right) and Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa pause during a news conference held to sum up their

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Marriage fund almost doubles in UAE budget

ABU DHABI (R) — A marriage fund set up in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to encourage nationals to marry local women has been promised 150 million dirhams (\$41 million) in the UAE's 1994 federal budget, almost double the 1993 allocation.

"This reflects the country's keenness to support the fund to achieve its aims," UAE minister of state for finance and industry Ahmad Humaid Al Tayar said in remarks published in newspaper.

It was one of the largest increases of any one category in the 1994 budget of 17.61 billion dirhams (\$4.79 billion) in spending and 16.2 billion dirhams (\$4.4 billion) revenues.

The marriage fund was set up in 1992 by UAE President Zaid Bin Sultan Al Nahayan to provide soft loans for wedding expenses to encourage UAE men to marry local women instead of foreigners.

It gives grants of up to 70,000 dirhams (\$19,000) to men who marry UAE women. It has so far approved more than 2,000 requests.

Since it was established, at least 11 tribes from the Gulf Arab state have met to denounce soaring costs of lavish parties, expensive gifts and dowries common in local weddings which they blame for UAE men seeking foreign wives.

Russia wants to limit foreign bank presence

DAVOS, Switzerland (AFP) — Moscow plans to limit the presence of foreign commercial banks in Russia to encourage the activity of local institutions, central bank chairman Victor Gerashchenko has said.

Mr. Gerashchenko said that foreign banks represent 12 per cent of the one trillion roubles (\$646 million) in capital held by the Russian banking community.

"We think that for a certain period of time, we will keep this limitation," he told AFP. "We need to promote our commercial banks."

Moscow has already moved to curb the activities of foreign commercial banks operating under licence in Russia, with only three of the 12 allowed to handle transactions with Russian residents.

Mr. Gerashchenko also said that \$20 billion placed by Russian banks abroad was not being properly used. He said of the country's 2,090 commercial banks, only 100 or so were serious institutions.

Boris Nemtsov, governor of the Nizhny Novgorod region, which is a showcase for Russian reforms, criticised the fact that the \$20 billion was being placed overseas at all. "Our first job is to direct Russian money to our economy," he said.

Mr. Gerashchenko said Russia was also looking at tax breaks and other special arrangements to attract selected foreign firms to invest in Russia.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY FEBRUARY 13, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Handle business matters wisely as you attempt to be more aware of the thoughts your associates are having where your mutual interests are concerned. Make alliances with influential persons.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) An ideal day to do something thoughtful for persons who treat you much in your life. **CELEBRITY:** The keynote now for an easy way to avoid an argument.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Putting things in order around you is wise in the morning. Then extend special favours to those who have been most loyal and helpful to you.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You are able to get into the inexpensive pleasure that you enjoy with friends. Control your temper with a person whose ideas you do not like.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Supporting your family in their ideas is good and also makes a good impression on others. Take it easy tonight.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) An ideal day for reading which you have put off. Also, converse with persons of wisdom and integrity. Relatives and friends are apt to be irritable, avoid for the time being.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Try not to spend foolishly today just to please selfish people. Show good reasoning powers on whatever may arise. Evening is ideal for some interest reading.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You are feeling limited and dull, so go to an amusing recreation or see an inspiring picture on TV, or go to a good play and have some fun.

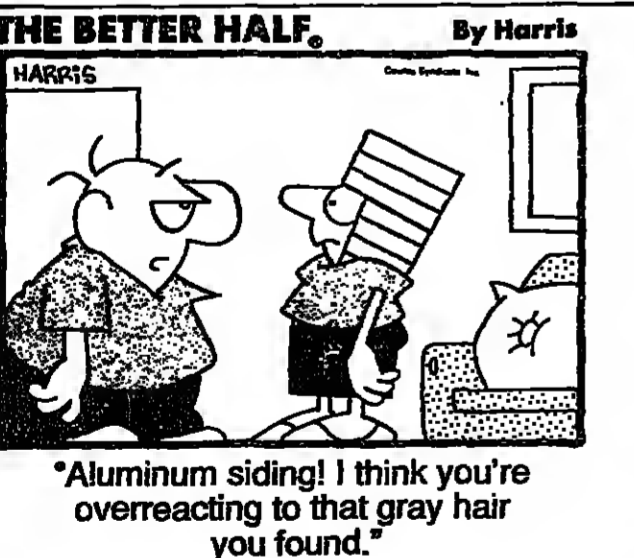
SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Show that you can be of great help to those who are in trouble of some kind. Extend your own horizons, also. If you think and act in an ethical fashion, you can be free of private worries.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) A friend acts in a strange fashion, but it is not your fault, so be patient and kind. Do join in group activity right now and avoid possible trouble.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Showing good judgment with persons who have power over your affairs is wise at this time. Plan how to be more influential in your community.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Visit with the most high-minded people you know and make this an inspiring day, whether it is in spiritual, scientific or business matters.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Being sure to use good judgment is important since your hunches are not good at this time. Carefully attend to any responsibilities that you may have.



THE BETTER HALF. By Harris

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SOULY
DYRYL
BUNGIL
METROH

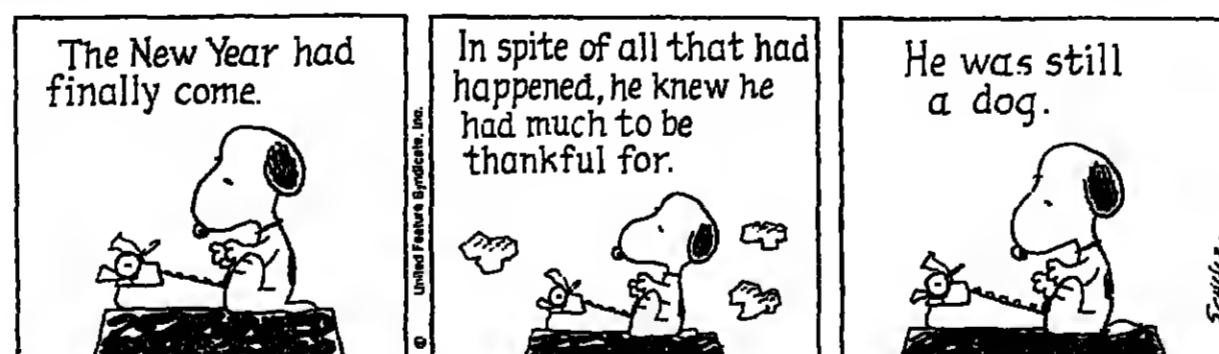
WHAT THE SUCCESSFUL BAKER WATCHED.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: THE "SOUL" (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: WALTZ SKUNK BEHOLD QUORUM
Answer: Another name for the blues joint proprietor — "SOUL" OWNER.

Peanuts



Andy Capp

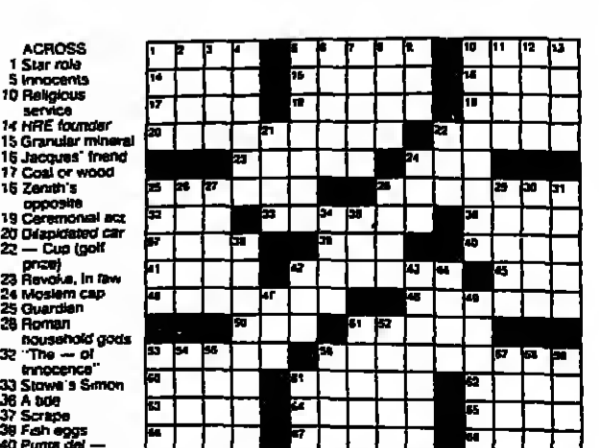


Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword

by Joan D. Barthrich



Yesterday's Puzzle Answer:

1 Across: Star role
2 Across: Reminders
3 Across: Reminders
4 Across: Reminders
5 Across: Reminders
6 Across: Reminders
7 Across: Reminders
8 Across: Reminders
9 Across: Reminders
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N. Korea says U.N. sanctions mean 'declaration of war'

TOKYO (R) — North Korea, lashing out over U.N. nuclear inspection demands, warned the United States Saturday that any sanctions would be deemed a "declaration of war."

The Stalinist state said it would refuse to let the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) make unconditional inspections of all nuclear sites. And it told President Bill Clinton's administration not to apply economic pressure to settle a bitter nuclear dispute.

North Korea has refused to allow checks on two sites widely believed to be part of a secret nuclear arms programme, and has blamed the crisis on "perfidious acts" by the United States.

The IAEA, a U.N. watchdog, holds a crucial board meeting on Feb. 21 in Vienna to decide whether to recommend economic sanctions against cash-strapped North Korea.

Mr. Clinton said Friday that economic sanctions were "one option" if North Korea continued to balk at inspections.

"The heavier the pressure on us, the firmer our determination," a North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman said separately Saturday.

He said Pyongyang still wanted to resolve the nuclear issue through dialogue.

"If it (Washington) thinks it can get something by frightening us with strength, regarding

pressure as an almighty solution, it is a mistake," he said.

In another comment raising the stakes in the row, Rodong Sinmun, the North Korea's ruling party daily, said:

"We have already declared in an explicit term that we would consider any kind of 'sanctions' to be something like a declaration of war against us."

"It is a well known fact that we never utter empty words."

Minju Josen, the official daily, said: "The seditious quarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency instigated by the United States are demanding a comprehensive inspection of the DPRK (North Korea) and threatening that it would take a new 'step' if we refused it."

"This is a sinister act trampling upon the sovereignty and dignity of our republic and a crude interference in our internal affairs," said the daily, according to the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) monitored in Tokyo.

"If the (IAEA) secretariat truly has the intention to peacefully solve the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula, it must renounce its unreasonable demand going beyond the scope of inspection necessary for the continuity of safeguards," the daily said.

Mr. Clinton told a news conference in Washington: "What we're doing now is consulting, all of us among one another, to try to see what our options are."

But obviously, the sanctions option is one option."

Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa told the same Washington news conference that the dispute with the headline Communist state was a matter of "very strong deep concern."

"Within the coming 10 days or so, very soon I would say, this issue is going to face a climax," Mr. Hosokawa said.

After months of negotiations, the North Koreans agreed with the United States last month to let the Atomic Energy Agency inspect five nuclear sites but not two further sites the agency wants to see.

North Korea said last week there was "no immediate prospect" of letting the IAEA conduct unconditional checks. Agency officials said this week they had received no further word from the Pyongyang government.

The United States has some 35,000 troops stationed in South Korea and has threatened to deploy Patriot anti-missile defence batteries if Pyongyang holds out against the IAEA.

CIA Director James Woolsey warned Tuesday that North Korea may be about to recover more plutonium, a main ingredient in nuclear weapons, by shutting down an atomic reactor at Yongbyon, 60 miles (100 miles) north of Pyongyang.

A North Korean diplomat in Beijing dismissed Mr. Woolsey's remarks.

Rodong Sinmun warned that it would consider any punitive measures by the U.S. to be a declaration of war and would punish it more seriously than in the 1950-1953 Korean War.

"If the United States tries to overpower the DPRK with strength, it would be a big mistake and it would meet defeat more serious than that it suffered in the Korean War in the 1950s," a North Korean analyst said.

Meanwhile, two leading South Korean newspapers carried editorials Saturday urging citizens to prepare for "the worst" if the nuclear confrontation with North Korea is not resolved peacefully.

However, government officials said the dispute had not reached a crisis point and called for continued dialogue with the North.

The editorials reflect a growing sense of pessimism in South Korea resulting from a belief that U.N. Security Council sanctions against longtime rival North Korea are inevitable — and could provoke a military response.

South Korean officials feel U.N. sanctions against North Korea for failure to allow international inspections of its nuclear facilities could push the isolated, unpredictable North to retaliate.



FIRST PRIZE: Swapam Parekh from the Black Star, USA, won the first prize Spot News with the above picture, taken after the earthquake in Latur, India. The prize was awarded at the World Press Photo Contest in Amsterdam, the Netherlands (AFP)

Defence force is ready to prevent disruption of election — De Klerk

BLOEMFONTEIN, South Africa (Agencies) — The South African Defence force has contingency plans ready to prevent any right-wing disruption of the April 26-28 all-race elections. President F.W. de Klerk said Saturday.

"We can't allow any minority to disrupt the process," he told journalists on a bus trip to a coloured (mixed race) township during the final day of his three-day election campaign tour of Orange Free State province.

Mr. De Klerk said he was certain of the basic loyalty of the security forces and that any threat would come from right-wingers outside the force.

Law and Order Minister Kobi Coetsee, who was travelling with the president, said that security had been tightened at army bases and arms depots.

"We have launched special plans to protect our personnel and safeguard our weapons," he said, warning against any attempt by white right-wingers to break into arms depots.

Weapons would be withdrawn from any members of the security forces who abused their arms or their positions, said Mr. Coetsee, who warned organisations against trying to put pressure on members of the defence force.

"As South Africa moves into the turbulent pre-election period it is important that the government can rely on the defence force and their professionalism. Any attempt to undermine their integrity will be immediately taken care of," Mr. Coetsee said that steps had also been taken to ensure

free and fair elections in Bophutswana and Kwazulu black homelands, which could boycott the polls.

Mr. De Klerk said he was "gravely concerned" that Bophutswana and Kwazulu's Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) would not contest the polls.

"Because of the power which they have... a difficult situation could arise," he said.

He added, however, that he remained "fairly confident" that a solution would be found to bring Bophutswana, the IFP and the white right-wing back into the democracy process.

The deadline for the registration of political parties contesting the election was set for midnight (2300 GMT) Saturday, but Mr. De Klerk has said it could be extended.

Meanwhile, chanting African National Congress (ANC) supporters hurled insults at President De Klerk Saturday and bodyguards had to clear a path for him to make an election campaign speech.

A crowd of about 700 supporters of the ANC and Mr. De Klerk's ruling National Party mingled in chaotic scenes outside the Heideveld Community Centre near the Orange Free State capital of Bloemfontein.

A heavy police and National Party security presence failed to deter ANC supporters from chanting and hurling abuse at the president when he arrived at the end of the three-day campaign tour.

Mr. De Klerk drew heckling and insults as his bodyguards pushed their way through the crowd, trying to reach a small

podium from where he had planned to address his followers.

ANC supporters waved banners saying "go away De Klerk." National Party supporters waved flags and posters welcoming him.

Mr. De Klerk managed to make a short speech in Afrikaans and then shouted above the turmoil in English: "I have travelled throughout the Orange Free State and I have discovered the majority is prepared to work and vote for the National Party."

He then left the township surrounded by worried bodyguards after the first serious disruption of the trip. ANC supporters chased his motorcade shouting abuse.

Key players remained on the sidelines of South Africa's political process Saturday only hours before the midnight deadline (2300 GMT) looming for political parties to register for the country's first all-race election.

By noon (1000 GMT), 11 organisations, including Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), President Dr. Klerk's National Party (NP) and the hardline Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), had registered for the vote.

But none of the conservative groups making up the Freedom Alliance had visited the offices of the independent Electoral Commission at the World Trade Centre here.

Two Alliance members, the white right-wing Afrikaner Volksfront (AVF) and Kwazulu tribal homeland, have already indicated they will snub the ballot.

Sri Lanka rebels make fresh peace bid

COLOMBO (AFP) — Tamil Tigers guerrillas have made a fresh appeal for peace and an end to Sri Lanka's dragging separatist war, a leader of non-governmental organisation who visited rebel-held territory said Saturday.

A.T. Ariyaratna who travelled to the northern Jaffna peninsula, dominated by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), said the rebels wanted him to convey their "desire for peace" to the government.

"I met the LTTE's Jaffna political leader Karikalan who expressed their desire to bring about peace. I have conveyed their message to the president," said Mr. Ariyaratna who heads the voluntary organisation called Sarvodaya.

He said Mr. Karikalan's message in Tamil was tape recorded and a transcript was made available to President Dingiri Banda Wijetunga who has often repeated that there was no ethnic conflict, only a terrorism problem on the island.

"I only conveyed to the president (this message) and he said he will give very serious thought to all that, and for me to continue confidence-building measures," Mr. Ariyaratna said.

The Tigers have asked the government to create conditions to bring about peace by dismantling a limited economic blockade on the peninsula. There have been no concrete proposals from the Tigers themselves.

Mr. Ariyaratna said he was planning several more visits to the Jaffna peninsula to "build confidence" between the majority Sinhalese community and the minority Tamils concentrated in the island's embattled northern and eastern regions.

He said his organisation was maintaining 134 refugee camps on the Jaffna peninsula. Access to the region has been restricted by both the LTTE and security forces.

Colombo's Catholic Archbishop, Nicholas Marcus Fernando, and the Anglican Bishop Kenneth Fernando made separate visits to Jaffna recently and reiterated the need to end the 22-year-old separatist war.

The two clergymen met LTTE leaders although Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran did not make an appearance.

The latest overtures from the LTTE came as Mr. Wijetunga took a hawkish stand on the Tigers' demand for a separate state called Eelam in the island's northeast and security forces acquired more military hardware and men.

There has been no response from the LTTE to an invitation by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe last month to make proposals to a parliamentary select committee in a bid to end the bloodshed.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tokyo gets heaviest snowfall in 25 years

TOKYO (AFP) — The heaviest snowfall in 25 years hit the Tokyo metropolitan area Saturday, paralyzing air, railway and highway traffic and injuring people. Almost 700 domestic flights were cancelled with runways heavily covered with snow. More than 300,000 passengers were affected by cancellations of trains, airline and railway company officials said. The snow delayed arrivals or departures of some 160 international flights at Tokyo's Narita Airport. The Meteorological Agency said that Tokyo recorded 23 centimetres (9.2 inches), the heaviest since 1969. Other areas in eastern and western Japan facing the Pacific Ocean were also covered by heavy snow. Any highways in and around Tokyo were closed, while some 30 pedestrians were injured after slipping or being hit by cars in Tokyo, police said. Police said that a 79-year-old woman died after being hit by a truck which slipped in Osaka, western Japan. A four-year-old boy in a taxi suffered a neck injury as the car slipped and hit an electric pole here, they said.

Charity walkers cross English Channel

FOLKESTONE, England (R) — More than 100 people made history Saturday with a charity walk through the new channel tunnel, the first people to travel on foot between England and France since the last ice age. Showbusiness and sports stars were among the mostly British sponsored walkers, with some admitting they were apprehensive about the 31-mile (50-km) hike through the rail tunnel, completed late last year but not yet open to traffic. Athlete Kris Akabusi said before setting off from Calais on the walk, organised by the Children's Society: "I have never suffered from claustrophobia but I do feel a bit apprehensive about being under ground for so long. But I don't think I will be tempted to start running." Fellow athlete Daley Thompson led the 118-strong team, accompanied by a doctor and a physiotherapist, on the 13-hour trek under the channel which was expected to raise more than £2 million (£2.9 million). Tycoon Richard Branson and executives of tunnel operators Eurotunnel waited to greet them at the English port of Folkestone.

Actor William Conrad dies at 74

LOS ANGELES (R) — William Conrad, the rotund actor best known for his long-running role as television's Cannon, died Friday of heart failure at his home in Hollywood, a family spokesman said. He was 73. Conrad starred as the fat but fat-moving private detective Frank Cannon on the CBS Television series from 1971 to 1976, and became a favourite with television viewers once again in 1987 as the portly district attorney, Jason "Fatman" McCabe in Jack and The Fatman which ran on CBS from 1987-1992. Conrad, who was born in Louisville, Kentucky, in September, 1920, moved to Hollywood as a young man and made his mark on radio as the voice of Marshall Matt Dillon in Gunsmoke, which later went on to become a popular television series. His resonant voice was also heard as a narrator on the television drama series The Fugitive, and The Invaders. An avowed animal lover and nature preservationist, Cannon also narrated The Wild, Wild, World of Animals, a syndicated television show which ran from 1973-1978. Even before his acclaim as an actor, he directed one of television's best known series, 77 Sunset Strip, from 1963 to 1964, which ran on ABC Television, and produced the 1960-61 NBC series Klondyke.

Berlusconi's brother denies bribery

MILAN (AFP) — Italian businessman Paolo Berlusconi, brother of media magnate Silvio Berlusconi, has acknowledged paying 540 million lira (\$317,000) in commissions for a series of property deals, but denied it amounted to bribery, judicial sources said Saturday. Mr. Berlusconi, 43, was placed under house arrest late Friday hours after he surrendered to police to face charges of corruption. During questioning Friday by magistrates in the "clean hands" corruption probe, he admitted having deposited the funds in the Lombard Carlo Savignani Bank between 1983 and 1986, during the sales of three buildings owned by his real estate firm Cantieri Riuniti Milanesi (CRM), the sources said. But he said the money went to pay legitimate commissions to intermediaries in the property deal. The magistrates however said it appeared more like a bribe. One of the alleged intermediaries, Giuseppe Clerici, has accused Paolo Berlusconi of paying out a bribe of more than one billion lira (\$600,000) during the sale of one building.

Russia launches military satellites

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia Saturday successfully launched into space a batch of six satellites designed for military purposes, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported. The Kosmos satellites were on board a Tsiklon-3 rocket launched from the northern base of Plesetsk, it said, citing the Russian Information Agency as saying the launch went off without problems.

Akihito visits Iwo Jima battlefield

IWO JIMA, Japan (R) — Emperor Akihito paid tribute Saturday to the 20,000 Japanese troops who died defending the desolate Pacific island of Iwo Jima in one of the bloodiest battles of World War II.

Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, both clad in mourning black, twice bowed deeply in front of the Teinan National Monument, perched on a hill where the Japanese garrison made its last stand against U.S. forces in March 1945.

The royal couple also laid chrysanthemum bouquets on another monument at Remembrance Hill dedicated to the Japanese troops and the 7,000 U.S. Marines and about 80 islanders who perished here in the battle.

Emperor Akihito's trip to Iwo Jima, 1,250 kilometres south of Tokyo, was the first by a Japanese monarch and part of 25th-anniversary rites marking the return of the Ogasawara, or Bonin, islands from U.S.-to-Japanese rule.

Last year, he made a similar trip to Okinawa, scene of the other major land battle on Japanese soil in the closing days of World War II.

His late father Hirohito, who died in 1989, never visited these battlefields because of lingering controversy over his wartime role.

Snow in north is good news for Florida

NEW YORK (Agencies) — As 1,700 vehicles ploughed a foot (30 cm) of snow from the streets of New York City, stranded travellers far to the south have been forced to undergo delays in comfort while they wait to go north towards home.

New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani urged New Yorkers to stay off the streets while the 1,700 vehicles work their way to secondary streets. He anticipated the process would consume the entire weekend.

There was no comfort for travellers waiting to leave closed airports in the north.

The airport is suburban Newark, New Jersey, which received 19 inches (48 cm) of snow, was expected to reopen Saturday morning, while New York's John F. Kennedy Airport was not due to reopen until the afternoon.

More than 2,500 people greeted Saturday from New York's airports, according to the Port Authority Police.

"There are somewhere in excess of 2,000 at Kennedy Airport," said officer Edward Mulligan, who told Reuters that about 500 spent the night at Newark and another 120 at Laguardia.

Friday's storm, which inconvenienced travellers Baltimore hundreds of miles north-

east to Boston, ended early Saturday as parts of the mid-west waited for warmer weather after the storm made its roads into ice rinks.

The storm, the 12th of the season, has made it the worst winter in the northeast since 1978, meteorologists said.

The New York Stock Exchange closed 90 minutes early, the first weather-related early closing since 1978. Other financial markets also closed early.

The federal government shut down all but essential operations in Washington, and most businesses and schools closed for the day.

The snow forced the United Nations Security Council to postpone its scheduled debate on Bosnia until Monday.

The Long Island Rail Road, the largest commuter rail system in the United States, was forced to halt service on a third of its network due to problems with snow buildup on its third-rail electric power supply. The crippled area included all service to and from New York's Pennsylvania Station.

About 200 commuters waited at the station until near midnight, when the railroad resumed limited service using diesel locomotives.

Much farther south, temperatures in the Miami area ho-

vered near 80 and tourists and business travellers extended their Florida vacations.

"I am finding that there are individuals who are stranded... happily stranded," said Mayo Villafana, spokesman for the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau.

"We love it when it gets cold," said Lisa Cole, a spokeswoman for Miami Beach's Fontainebleau Hilton and Spa.

Ms. Cole said the hotel is receiving more than 100 calls a day from chilled northerners eager to get some sun and surf. "It's an automatic reflex to get on the phone to get a room in Miami," she said.

The extra business is welcome news for Florida's tourism industry, which has taken a beating since a series of high-profile attacks on tourists last year. Tourism is the state's largest industry.

For others, getting to Florida is the main obstacle.

Rich Stock, spokesman for Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, said bookings were affected temporarily by snowed-in vacationers who were unable to leave their northern homes.

At Norwegian Cruise Line, the volume of calls has soared. Spokeswoman Stacy Moyer said reservation clerks were

working overtime to accommodate guests who had flights cancelled.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Congress approved \$8.6 billion in relief for victims of the Los Angeles earthquake Friday, along with \$3.2 billion in spending cuts.

"I'm gratified at how quickly and generously they responded," said Representative Howard Berman, a Democrat from California, as legislators from the two chambers hammered out a compromise.

The House of Representatives voted 245-65 for the new version. Senate approval was triggered by the House vote.

Budget Director Leon Panetta said the relief package for the Jan. 17 earthquake was the most expensive in U.S. history. The tremor killed 61 people and caused \$20 billion in property damage.

President Bill Clinton said he planned to sign the bill early Saturday. "While short-term disaster relief is absolutely necessary, I want to assure that we'll be there over the long run as well," he said.

The bill also includes \$1.2 billion for defence spending in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Somalia and elsewhere and \$685 million in additional relief for victims of last year's floods in the Midwest.

Controversial film opens in London

LONDON (AFP) — The controversial film In the Name of the Father, which already picked up seven Oscars nominations, opened here Friday amid criticism for its portrayal of a serious British miscarriage of justice in its fight against the IRA. The film, directed by Jim Sheridan, tells the story of the Guildford 4 who were wrongly convicted of the bombing of a pub in the town in southern Britain. In 1975 the four young people from Northern Ireland were sentenced to life imprisonment for the bombing in Guildford in which five people died and more than 60 were injured. But after increasing evidence that there had been a miscarriage of justice, the case was reopened and after serving 15 years in prison the four were finally freed by the court of appeal in October 1989. Along with the cases of the Maguire 7 and the Birmingham 6, it became one of the most spectacular symbols of the failure of British justice in its fight against the outlawed Irish Republican Army (IRA). Sheridan has now taken the story of the four — Gerard Conlon, Paul Hill, Patrick Armstrong and Carole Richardson — and turned it into a film. It is Ireland's third biggest box-office hit of all time, outselling only by Steven Spielberg's Jurassic Park and Alan Parker's The Commitments, which was filmed in Dublin. At its first showings in Dublin in December, audiences gave it a standing ovation. But despite its success, the film has come under a hail of criticism for its portrayal of the case. Sheridan has had to fend off accusations that he has bent the truth, especially in showing the relationship between Conlon (played by Daniel Day-Lewis) and his father, and in giving lawyer Gareth Peirce (played by Emma Thompson) a more dominant role. "In the name of the father is a distortion that covers up the truth again," said historian Robert Kee, who led the campaign to free the four. "In doing so, it may have handed something on a plate to the very sort of people long happy to say out of the side of their mouth — wrongly — that no miscarriage of justice took place at all."

Lovers flock to blacksmith's shop

LONDON (R) — Britain's most romantic marriage register office — an old blacksmith's shop at Gretna Green in Scotland — will open specially on Valentine's Day by popular demand. The office, normally open only from Tuesday to Saturday, is already fully booked Monday with 21 couples travelling from all parts of Britain to tie the knot. "We have been inundated with requests and we felt we couldn't let people down," said registrar Sheila Smith. Gretna Green's romantic reputation began in 1754 when marriage by declaration was ended in England and Wales. After that only Scotland allowed lovers under the age of 18 to marry without parental consent and the blacksmith's shop at Gretna Green was the first place couples reached after crossing the border from England. The tradition ended in 1940 when such marriages were outlawed in Scotland but the village has maintained its romantic attraction.

Miss South Carolina crowned Miss USA

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, Texas (AP) — Lu Parker, a high school English literature teacher representing South Carolina, was crowned Miss USA Friday night. Ms. Parker will receive \$235,000 in cash and prizes and represent the United States in the Miss Universe pageant on May 20 in Manila, Philippines. Miss USA 1993 Kenya Moore of Detroit crowned Ms. Parker at the end of the two-hour programme aired nationally. The 25-year-old Charleston native also won the evening gown event. Runner-up was Patricia Southall, 23, of Chesapeake, Va., a former aide to Virginia Gov. Douglas Wilder. Ms. Southall won both the swimsuit and preliminary interview events. Second runner-up was Lynn Jenkins, 25, of Gastonia, N.C., who described herself as a motivational speaker. The pageant included representatives from the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Miss Universe Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Madison Square Garden, a Paramount Communications Company, produces the Miss Universe, Miss USA and Miss Teen USA pageants.

Maradona maps out future coaching and caviar

ENOS AIRES (R) — Diego Maradona, sacked by his club last week and at the Argentine press, still set on a fourth World Cup and then wants to become national team coach.

Maradona said: "I want to be a coach and try to make it to the top. I'd like to learn from the best, become his number two."

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Faisali keep firm grip on top of Jordan soccer championship

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As the 13th stage of Jordan's soccer first division championship ended Friday, Al Faisali and Al Hussein appear to be the two teams that most benefitted from their results while lowly Al Baqaa and Sahab got a moral boost as both drew and thus managed to advance their standing leaving newcomers Al Fuheis in last place.

While titleholders Al Faisali kept a firm grip atop the standings with a commanding 9 point lead after a 3-2 win over Al Ramtha, Al Hussein moved from fourth to 3rd place with a 1-0 win over Al Fuheis.

Al Faisali took total control of the match following Mousa Awad's 3rd minute goal that stunned Al Ramtha. From then on, the titleholders lost half a dozen chances to score in the first half before Ja'far Hammad netted in the second goal.

While Al Faisali celebrated their third goal by Hammad, Al Ramtha's Khaled Al Aqouri blasted a long shot that went over Al Faisali's goal.

As Al Faisali played in a slack manner Aqouri again scored for his team in the 76th minute. However Al Faisali managed to keep their lead

Norway's King Harald opens Lillehammer Games



Young Norwegians perform a theatrical piece of Lillehammer before the opening ceremony Saturday with the Olympic flame in a village east (AFP)

LILLEHAMMER (R) — King Harald of Norway formally opened the Lillehammer Winter Olympics Saturday in a glittering ice pageant chronicling his people's age-old battle with cold mother nature.

Reindeer pulled sleighs, indigenous Sami (Lapps) sang pagan hymns, and two parachutists waving a giant Norwegian flag fell from a freezing but cloudless northern sky.

But thoughts were also turned to 1984 host city Sarajevo as International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch asked for a moment's silence and appealed for an end to the fighting.

An estimated global television audience of two billion, and 40,000 spectators in the Lysgaardsbakkene ski jump stadium, heard the king utter the traditional words — "I hereby declare open the 17th Olympic Winter Games in Lillehammer."

The Olympics bring together 1,988 athletes for 16 days of top-class competition in 61 different events. A Winter Olympic record of 69 nations joined Saturday's hour-long athletes' parade.

Ahead of the games, the prospect of sporting excellence has been overshadowed by the carnage in Sarajevo and by the Tonya Harding saga still raging through the U.S. team.

In the arena, 19-year-old cross-country skier Bakim Babie entered the Olympic arena carrying the flag of Bosnia-Herzegovina at half-mast as a mark of respect to the slaughter in his home town of Sarajevo.

And both Olympic chief Samaranch, who hopes to visit the Bosnian capital next week, and Lillehammer organizer Gerhard Heiberg told the crowd that the city was in their thoughts.

"Ten years ago, Sarajevo welcomed the Winter Games and we know what tragedy has struck it since," said Heiberg in a speech ahead of King Harald's opening declaration.

"That is why, gathered here in Lillehammer today, we want to send our warmest thoughts and profound sympathy to the people of Sarajevo, whose lives have taken such a tragic turn."

Samaranch, wearing an Olympic truce emblem on his coat, asked for a moment's silence which was observed.

He appealed to the warring factions: "Please stop the fighting. Stop the killing. Drop your guns."

Some of sport's biggest names missed the opening ceremony, including U.S. figure skaters Harding and Nancy Kerrigan.

Harding is fighting a legal battle in her home state of Oregon to prevent the U.S. Olympic Committee hold a planned hearing in Norway next week to decide whether she should be thrown out of the games.

Kerrigan, hit with an iron bar last month in an assault which Harding's ex-husband and associates have admitted they carried out, has already arrived at the games — but decided not to join the athletes' parade because of the cold.

Temperatures in Lillehammer have barely risen above minus 10 Celsius for the past week and the 1.32 metres of snow on the ground was just two centimetres off the all-time record.

The cold and controversy were forgotten as thousands of spectators including U.S. first lady Hillary Clinton received a taste of Norway's rich folk culture and sporting expertise in a two-hour opening ceremony costing a cool \$11 million.

Maleeva upsets Navratilova

Chicago (R) — Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria spoiled the bid for a 13th Virginia Slims Chicago title, posting a 6-4 upset victory Friday in the quarter-finals.

Navratilova, 37, who is making her farewell tour this year, played an emotional standing ovation from the crowd at the University of Illinois-Chicago gymnasium.

"I was okay until I was going off the court, and somebody said 'thank you, prima,'" Navratilova said, eyes red from crying. "If it's any indication, I'm going to cry every time I play, win or lose."

Maleeva had only one previous victory against Navratilova in five meetings but that was in a big spot — a three-set triumph at the 1992 U.S. Open.

"I'm glad I beat her on her surface," Maleeva said. "In the first set, Navratilova broke at break point in the first and third sets, but failed to capitalize. I broke Navratilova at 5-3 in the eighth game for 5-3 as the top seed double-locked on the last point."

Maleeva broke Navratilova the fourth game of the second set to lead 3-1, after the two exchanged five breaks. Maleeva held to go 5-2, firing an ace for the game-winner.

"The biggest problem was my inability to return better and take advantage of the break points," Navratilova said. "Obviously, I was not at my best today and she was."

Navratilova's loss put a damper on tournament festivities. Because this is her last year on the tour and since Navratilova has had such success in Chicago, she has been showered with gifts and tributes all week.

The Chicago Park District honoured her between her singles and doubles matches Friday, reading salutations from President Clinton, Illinois Governor Jim Edgar and other dignitaries. Edgar already had proclaimed this week as "Martina Navratilova days" in Illinois.

"It's never easy, especially coming from Bulgaria," Maleeva said about going such a crowd favourite.

"There are no tournaments in Bulgaria. I'm kind of used to it (lack of fan support). We always were the bad ones coming from the communist countries."

The 18-year-old Maleeva, youngest of the three tennis playing sisters, will play unseeded and 47th-ranked American Chanda Rubin in the quarter-finals.

Rubin, who turns 18 next week, defeated unseeded compatriot Sandra Cacic 6-4 6-0 in their quarter-final.

Veteran U.S. racer killed

DAYTONA BEACH, Florida (AFP) — U.S. race car driver Neil Bonnett, trying a limited comeback following a severe accident in 1990, was killed here Friday when he crashed in the first practice for the Daytona 500.

Bonnett, 47, of Bessemer, Alabama, won 18 victories on the NASCAR Circuit, the most popular form of U.S. auto racing.

Witnesses said Bonnett's Chevrolet car appeared to slide in oil from the blown engine of another vehicle. Bonnett's car slammed head-on into the fourth-turn outer wall at the 2 1/2-mile Daytona International Speedway oval.

Bonnett sustained massive head injuries and was taken to nearby Halifax Medical Centre in critical condition.

Bonnett had suffered concussion and partial loss of memory in a 1990 crash at Darlington, South Carolina and retired after doctors advised him to quit.

He retired and worked as a television commentator but he began a limited comeback last year only to crash again in Talladega, Alabama, last July.

Bonnett planned to run the Feb. 20 Daytona event and five other NASCAR events this season while continuing with television commentary for others.

Since the track opened in 1959, 26 people have been killed there. The Alabama driver's death was the first since James Adano was killed last year.

Bonnett is the third NASCAR star driver to die in the past twelve months. Alan Kulwicki died in a plane crash last April and Davey Allison died July 13, a day after his helicopter crashed at Talladega Speedway.

Becker posts a warning

MILAN (AFP) — Fifth-seed Boris Becker, determined to turn his back on his disastrous 1993 season, continued his impressive run at the ATP tournament here late Friday night by reaching the semi-finals of the event.

The three-times Wimbledon champion, who has returned to the tour after a seven-week absence during which he assisted at the birth of his son, defeated fourth-seeded Frenchman Cedric Pioline 6-2, 4-6, 6-2. He now plays French-based Ronald Agener of Haiti for a place in Sunday's final.

Agener, who defeated Becker's compatriot and world number-two Michael Stich in the second-round, Friday outlasted Wally Masur of Australia in a tight three-setter.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITTI OMAR SHARIF & YAMMAN HIRSH
Tehran Bridge Services, Inc.

WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q1—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
AKB74 CAS 07 #1088742
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 2 3 4
What do you bid now?

Q2—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
AKB74 CAS 07 #1088742
Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?

Q3—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
AKB74 CAS 07 #1088742
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 2 3 4
What do you bid now?

Q4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
AKB74 CAS 07 #1088742
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 2 3 4
What do you bid now?

Q5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AKB74 CAS 07 #1088742
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q6—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
AKB74 CAS 07 #1088742
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 2 3 4
What do you bid now?

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Super deluxe unfurnished apartment, 195 square metres, consisting of 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, salon, dining, balcony, oakwood kitchen (Alno) with central heating, elevator, special garage. Location: Rabieh, adjacent to the Chinese embassy.

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That three-letter word that gives Nordic skiers a kick

By Stuart Doughty
Reuter

LILLEHAMMER — Nothing is more guaranteed to evoke intrigue, suspicion and exaggerated claims of secret technology at the Winter Olympics than the mention of a certain three-letter word ending in x.

Wax.

To anyone outside the sport its importance is as unfathomable as the mind of a high-hill ski jumper, but for the professionals and purists it represents the elusive X-factor that can turn a leading skier into an Olympic champion.

Nordic skiing powers spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in the run-up to the Olympics trying to produce a new form of wax that they hope will give their cross-country skiers even the slightest advantage over rivals.

The intrigue began when Norway presented their eight-man waxing team to the press just days before the games opened. They claimed to have designed a new wax and found a radical way of applying it to skis to give their athletes an edge.

All attempts to prize details of their latest super wax from the men charged with making Norway's Olympic champions go faster than the rest were met with wry grins and evasive answers.

"We will tell you all about it after the 50 kilometres race," head waxer Terje-Olav Seim said, referring to the final cross-country event of the winter games.

When pressed to reveal what advantage the new wax and technology might give the Norwegians, he answered: "To get our skiers to the finishing line more quickly."

Waxing plays a dual role — either to make the skis slide more easily over the longer stretches and down the slopes or give the racer the traction to kick strongly and pass opponents.

At the 1988 Calgary Olympics, Norway managed just a silver and bronze in the men's cross-country, for three successive Olympics without a gold medal in their national sport. Fearing possible humiliation at their own Lillehammer Games, the Norwegians set up a programme designed to bring success.

Norway's huge investment in waxing technology has been partly credited for the success of their cross-country skiers over the past three years.

Head coach Inge Braaten said: "After 1989 the Norwegians started doing altitude training and developed a lot of new methods for waxing skis."

Maleeva-Fragniere reaches her last tournament's final

AMAGASAKI, Japan (AFP) — Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere breezed past Mana Endo in the semi-finals here Saturday to move to within a match of ending her professional career on a high note at the \$150,000 Asia Open women's tennis tournament.

Determined to retire on a winning note, the top-seeded Bulgarian-born Swiss dominated the match with accurate baseline strokes, coasting to a 6-0, 6-3 victory over the Japanese third seed.

Maleeva-Fragniere, who will turn 27 Monday, has decided to hang up her racket after Sunday's final.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

U.N. team leaves Iraq with uranium

BAGHDAD (R) — A United Nations team left Baghdad on Saturday for Russia carrying an unspecified amount of enriched uranium confiscated from Iraq under U.N. Gulf war ceasefire provisions, a U.N. spokesman said. The uranium will be sent to Russia until the International Atomic Energy Agency decides what to do with it, Justice Yitalo of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) told Reuters. He said the commission believed there was no more nuclear fuel left in Iraq.

Terrorist academy operator held

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — A man has been arrested and charged with operating an "academy of terrorism" in Beirut, military prosecutor Nassef Lahoud's office revealed Saturday. Ghaleb Hussein Al Jamal, 38, was charged \$50 per lesson on "terrorist attacks at the academy he founded in Beirut's Bourj Al Barajneh Palestinian refugee camp four months ago, Mr. Lahoud's office statement said. It did not give details of the curriculum, but said Mr. Jamal's son-in-law, Mahmoud Zoubi, has been accused in absentia of recruiting "dozens of students for the academy." No specific figure for the number of students was given, but the statement asserted that none has "put what he learned into practice or committed any crime."

U.S. to boost Israeli military advisers

KUWAIT (R) — The United States will quadruple the number of its military advisers in Kuwait this year to help modernize the country's armed forces, a newspaper reported on Saturday. The English-language Arab Times, quoting an unnamed U.S. military official, said the number of advisers would rise to approximately 400 from 20 presently.

Thailand pulls out of Algeria

BANGKOK (AP) — Thailand's government will pull out the remaining 13 Thai troops from Algeria by Feb. 24 due to unsafe conditions, a Thai official said Saturday. The Foreign Ministry said the political situation in Algeria, which has seen several incidents of murder and kidnapping of foreigners, was no longer safe for Thai troops. The Thai government was waiting for South Korean troops to be pulled out before completing the withdrawal.

Tunisia's rights activists resume activities

TUNIS (R) — Tunisia's League for the Defence of Human Rights said Saturday it was resuming normal activities with government approval after a ban on its activities since its independence. "We are happy to resume our work," said a spokesman. "We are happy to see Ben Ali in which he said that the league was not to be safeguarded," the league's new president, Mohamed Souderbia, told a press conference.

UAE leader pardons 111 prisoners

ABU DHABI (AP) — United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan has pardoned 112 prisoners to mark the holy month of Ramadan, the official news agency Wafa reported on Saturday. Those freed were not guilty of serious crimes and had served at least half of their terms, it said.

Egyptian policeman kills superior

CAIRO (AP) — A police officer in a hysterical rage shot dead his superior and an assistant. The interior ministry on Saturday ruled out any political motivation. In a statement distributed by the state-owned Middle East News Agency, the ministry said Major Abdul Wahab Mohammad Barakat had recently been at odds with his superior in Sohag, southern Egypt. He had been disciplined with a loss of more than two months' pay. Maj. Barakat emerged from police headquarters Friday and opened fire at Colonel Negi Mikhail and his assistant, Yacoub Girgels, the ministry said. Both died instantly.

Bomb kills four Turkish military staff

ANKARA (R) — A time bomb planted in a dustbin at a railway station near Istanbul Saturday killed four military cadets and wounded 27 people, Istanbul Governor Hayri Kozakoglu said. Turkish Health Minister Kazim Ding said earlier that one of those killed was a soldier and about 30 people had been wounded.

Indonesian reporters to interview Rabin

TEL AVIV (AP) — Indonesia's first four journalists to be invited to visit Israel will interview Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the government press office said Saturday. Three reporters and the editor of the Medan Indonesia daily were invited by the Israeli foreign ministry, the press office said. In its Saturday edition, the newspaper said they were assured of obtaining the interview by Avi Shlaim, the director for Southeast Asia at the Israeli foreign ministry, and that the newsmen would meet Mr. Rabin Sunday.

Canada reports 3 Turkish boys and mother

TORONTO (AP) — Three Turkish boys who have spent the last eight years growing up in Canada have been ordered deported along with their mother, despite a letter writing campaign by teachers asking to keep them here. Zafer Kayik, 15, his brothers Cemil, 12, and Mustafa, 10, and his mother, Ayse, 36, will be returned to Turkey on Sunday night. "It really hurts," said Zafer, a grade 10 student. "It hurts my brothers more than it will hurt me. They don't know how it is over there and how it will be." The family was ordered deported by immigration officials who rejected the claim the family would be subject to persecution in Turkey because they are Kurds.

Journalists expelled from Azerbaijan

MOSCOW (AP) — Three journalists have been expelled from Azerbaijan, Russian officials said. An unauthorized visit to a village near the Iranian border, one of the journalists said. Dick Gordon of the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. (CBC) said he, CBC radio producer David ... and a journalist for the Toronto-based South ... agency, Mike Trickey, were detained at the Iranian border camp at Imeshli before being told Friday they were being expelled. They had 48 hours to leave the country.

Shuttle lands in Florida

CAPE CANAVERAL (AP) — Five astronauts and a cosmonaut returned to Earth aboard the first U.S.-Russian space shuttle mission. The 27-ton spaceship glided to a touchdown with Marine ... Charles Bolden at the controls at 2:45 p.m. EST.

U.S. reports find in Laos MIA hunt

HANOI (R) — U.S. military officials said Saturday that search teams had found human remains and aircraft debris in their drive to account for U.S. Vietnam War servicemen listed as missing in action (MIA) in the mountains and jungles of Laos. Experts investigated 24 of the 495 MIA cases in Laos and excavated six suspected crash or grave sites, the Hawaii-based Joint Task Force — Full Accounting (JTFA) said in a statement received here.

Thousands flee renewed Somali fighting

MOGADISHU (R) — Gunmen of rival warlords clashed in the worst fighting for six months in the southern Somali port of Kismayu, driving up to 5,000 civilians out of the area, aid workers and U.N. officers said on Saturday.

At least five people were killed and 32 wounded in the fighting which lasted 90 minutes on Friday, said one aid worker who had left Kismayu on Saturday.

U.N. officers said Kismayu area, the gateway to the fertile south, as a prime flashpoint for renewed civil war in Somalia with the pullout of most U.S. troops and their Western allies due to completed by March 31.

Friday's battles were between the forces of General Mohammad Said Hersi "Morgan" and supporters of rival Colonel Ahmad Omar Jess, who was routed from the town in March last year.

Aid workers said the civilians were driven out by Gen.

Morgan's forces and came from the Ogadeni sub-clan.

Kismayu was quiet but extremely tense Saturday with most people, including aid workers, hiding indoors. The aid workers expected violence to resume after the forces had regrouped.

"Everyone in Kismayu knows Jess is going to do something to revenge Morgan driving the Ogadenis out," said one official.

They said the battles were sparked by an attack by warlord Mohammad Farah Aided's Somali National Alliance (SNA) militia on a camp held by Gen. Morgan's forces in Bulo Xaaji, 80 kilometres southwest of Kismayu.

SNA militiamen took prisoners, including a colonel, in the attack on Thursday, they added. Col. Jess, head of the Darod Ogadeni Mohammad sub-clan, joined forces with Gen. Aided in 1992. At least

five people were also killed in Thursday's fighting.

U.N. military officers have reported a buildup of militia forces since November outside Kismayu in an apparent prelude to Col. Jess launching an offensive to recapture his former stronghold.

The workers said "technical" battle wagons mounted with heavy weapons, were seen near Kismayu in the last two weeks.

Indian U.N. troops took over Kismayu in December from Belgium peacekeepers.

A U.N. military spokesman said Saturday the situation in Kismayu was "stable" concerning the safety of the 1,200 Indian troops in the area but more inter-clan violence was imminent.

Aid workers said the last three foreign aid agencies in the central town of Belet Huen evacuated three international staff Saturday after hand grenade attacks the night before.

They said two grenades exploded in the compound of the Los Angeles-based International Medical Corps (IMC) and one wrecked the bedroom of a woman staff member. She was not in the room.

They also reported a lot of shooting in the town overnight.

"Belet Huen has gone to hell," said an aid agency official, who declined to be identified. He added that this was the first time that all international aid agencies had evacuated their foreign staff from the town since they first arrived in 1992.

The Seattle-based Christian charity World Concern evacuated its last two American staff from Belet Huen on Friday. All its American staff left Mogadishu after a bomb attack last Sunday.

Aid workers linked a spate of bombings and shooting in Belet Huen in the last three weeks to Somali factions jock-

eying to fill the power vacuum left by the withdrawing U.N. forces.

They said the town was one of the quietest in Somalia until Italian units started pulling out. There are 52 U.N. Italian troops left in Belet Huen with 950 German troops. The first shipment of Germans leaves Mogadishu port for home on Sunday.

The U.N. Security Council this month cut the number of its troops in Somalia for the next six months to a maximum of 22,000. At the peak of the U.N. operation to stop militia-men and bandits blocking supplies to end famine more than 30,000 U.N. troops were deployed.

It also reduced the mandate of the nearly year-old U.N. operation in Somalia, abandoning any attempt forcibly to disarm clan factions or gunmen hampering aid distribution.

Sudan rebel faction urges U.N. action

NAIROBI (Agencies) — A Sudanese rebel leader on Saturday called on the U.N. to intervene to stop what he called the government's extermination and enslavement of people in the south.

Riek Mashar, head of one of the two rival factions of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), said Khartoum's military government had taken advantage of the rebels' divisions to launch its biggest offensive ever in the past two months.

"An estimated four million people are at risk of death in south Sudan due to the Sudan government military offensive, drought and starvation," Mr. Mashar told a news conference in the Kenyan capital Nairobi.

U.N. official said at least two million people were threatened with starvation in the rebel-held south, as well as another two million displaced southerners living in squalid camps around Khartoum. They said the offensive was driving 140,000 southerners towards the Ugandan border.

"The deplorable and despicable practices of slavery and slave trade have surfaced," Mr. Mashar said.

Speaking a day after U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali expressed concern about the escalation of the war and widespread human rights violations by all sides, Mr. Mashar accused government forces of kidnapping children and selling them to Sudanese farmers and to Saudi Arabia and Libya.

He said the government was "exporting its brand of Iranian Islamic fundamentalism to neighbouring states of Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda." Eritrea complained of attacks by groups based in Sudan.

Mr. Mashar urged the United Nations to appoint a peace mediator to negotiate an end to the decades-old conflict between the Arabised north and the largely black south which erupted into full-scale civil war in 1983.

Mr. Mashar, who broke with SPLA leader John Garang in 1991 to form the SPLA-United splinter group, urged the United Nations to impose an oil and arms embargo on Sudan, "establish safe havens for civilians in south Sudan, and put pressure on Khartoum to accept an immediate ceasefire and allow in relief supplies."

Mr. Mashar has long been accused by Colonel Garang of collaborating with the Khartoum government.

"We appeal to the U.N. Security Council to react expeditiously to the situation in southern Sudan and appoint mediators to end the conflict there," Mr. Mashar said.

He added: "If necessary the U.N. must send troops to create safe havens for the civilian population there."

Political analysts said areas controlled by the SPLA-United near the Ethiopian border had not been attacked.

Mahdi blames mosque attack on regime's policies

KHARTOUM (AP) — In a startling press report, a former prime minister was quoted Saturday as blaming a machine-gun massacre in a mosque on Muslim extremist policies of Sudan's military government.

The report in a government publication also said Sadeq Al Mahdi, ousted in 1989 by Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir, implied that the government was not pursuing the investigation vigorously.

It is "paying more attention to its own security, tightening its grip on its opponents, more than the security of its citizens," Al Sudani international quoted Dr. Mahdi as saying.

Publication of such uncompromising criticism is perhaps unprecedented in 4½ years of Gen. Bashir's rule, especially by an opposition leader, most especially by Dr. Mahdi. The government owns and controls print media.

In a report issued this month evaluating Sudan's human rights record in 1993, the U.S. State Department wrote: "The media rarely mentioned, and always negatively, opposition figures. ... they almost never criticised the government, and on the few occasions they did, the criticism was benign."

Al Sudani International said Dr. Mahdi made the critical remarks to leaders of the Ansar Sunna Islamic sect he called to express sympathy for the Feb. 4 deaths of 13 of their followers. Gunmen killed them and wounded 20 other worshippers as they left the sect's principal mosque following Friday prayers.

The daily reported that Dr. Mahdi said the massacre occurred because Gen. Bashir's government "opens the door of the country for fundamentalists and extremists who believe in nothing except arms and reject dialogue for solving differences."

red because Gen. Bashir's government "opens the door of the country for fundamentalists and extremists who believe in nothing except arms and reject dialogue for solving differences."

The former prime minister expressed "scepticism over the government's seriousness for preventing the incident or punishing the attackers," Al Sudani International said.

It said he "questioned the role of the state security organs," in allowing such a high profile operation to occur, including two raids on police stations and other movements about the Khartoum area before and after the mosque massacre.

But Al Sudani International said Dr. Mahdi informed the sect leaders he does not believe speculation that the government planned the attack, which it has denied. Some have suggested also that he regime's main bulwark, the National Islamic Front, might have had a hand in it. The Ansar Sunna is mildly critical of government Islamic policies and bitterly opposed to those of the front.

In their investigations, police have arrested a Libyan and Yemeni, both injured in gunfights after the mosque attack. Security forces also killed a Chadian and two West Africans in confrontations during the investigations.

On Friday, a week after the massacre, thousands of Ansar Sunna, prayed in the mosque and vowed to continue propagating their sect's Islamic teachings.

Al Sudani International described Friday's Ansar Sunna congregation as its largest gathering ever.

Oslo painting is stolen as Winter Olympics start

OSLO (R) — Two thieves stole one of the world's most famous paintings, "The Scream" by Edvard Munch, in Oslo Saturday and there was speculation it could be a stunt linked to the start of the Lillehammer Olympics or possibly extortion.

The two men, filmed by video surveillance, climbed into the national gallery in central Oslo using a ladder. They smashed a window, grabbed the 1893 painting of a face wide-mouthed in terror, and disappeared.



General view of the Lysgardsbakken Stadium at the beginning of the opening ceremony of the XVII Olympic Winter Games in Lillehammer (AFP photo)

The spectacular opening ceremony of the Olympic Games was held on Saturday, (see page 9), beamed by television around the world and watched live by 49,000 spectators including Norway's King Harald and Olympic chief Juan Antonio Samaranch.

Iraqis mark America bombing anniversary, vow not to forget

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMERIA, Baghdad — Feb. 13 marks the single most traumatic day of remembrance for residents of this Baghdad suburb every year. It was on this day in 1991 that two Allied bombs hit a large civilian bomb shelter at 4 a.m. and left over 400 women and children dead.

Today the shelter has been turned into a museum. Guided tours are given by the mother of one of the bombing victims. Pictures of the 403 identified victims as well as dozens of pictures of victims whose bodies were never found decorate the long black walls of the shelter's interior.

Plastic and paper flower wreaths lie beneath each photo. A place for prayer for both Muslims and Christians has been built inside the shelter which now serves as a mausoleum and symbol of the civilian victims of the war over Kuwait.

Many foreign observers maintain that the two-storey shelter contained a third

underground floor in which senior Iraqi military personnel hid. But no one has brought forth any evidence to substantiate this claim. No member of the allied coalition has ever admitted that the bombing of the Ameria shelter was a mistake or misguided judgement.

Iraqis, both military and the survivors of the shelter, view the claim that the Ameria shelter was a military target as an unfounded excuse which the allies used to disassociate themselves from guilt.

"This was and is a civilian shelter and claims to the contrary are untrue," says shelter museum curator Saleema Abbas. "If there was anything military underneath then why did they not find it?" she asks.

Mrs. Abbas lost her 14-year daughter Ghaida in the shelter as well as eight other members of her family. She dusts pictures of victims, straightens the wreaths and gives guided tours to state visitors and members of the press.

The site of the bombing

has been left as it was and is surrounded by dozens of wreaths. Outside the shelter the door has been decorated by a large canvas of red flames from which white doves reach for the sky.

"These are the souls of the innocent flying towards heaven," explains Mrs. Abbas.

Every Thursday, mothers, fathers and other family members who lost relations in the bombing visit the site. They pray and leave.

According to official records, 1,200 people entered the Ameria shelter the night of Feb. 12. Only parts of 403 bodies were recovered after the fire ignited by the two consecutive bombs was put out. Many people suffocated but most burned to death.

Until the allies either apologise for mistakenly hitting this civilian shelter or prove that it was a justified military target the anger over the Ameria shelter bombing will remain alive in the hearts of most Iraqis, who consider the bombing of the shelter the "worst single crime of the allied war against Iraq."

3 French tourists freed in Yemen

SANAA (Agencies) — Tribesmen Saturday freed three French tourists from three weeks of captivity after authorities promised to complete an abandoned road project in their desert region, a negotiator announced.

Sheikh Mohammad Abul Lohoum, secretary of the Bakel confederation of tribes that was negotiating for the release of the three, said the tribe let their captives go at 5 a.m. (0200 GMT).

They have been identified as 42-year-old cardiologist Brigitte Fontaine, and elderly retired agriculture teacher Henri Heslot and his wife Jeanne.

Sheikh Mohammad told the Associated Press in a telephone interview that he was advised by his companions the three were "in good condition."

Two hours later, Interior Minister Yehya Al Mutawakil confirmed that the three had reached Sanaa and were in satisfactory condition.

The three arrived in a Yemeni army helicopter from the village of Al Madan where they were held by Ahnum tribesmen.

intervened to help free them," said a French foreign ministry spokesman in Paris.

He said the three who were in good health had been received by the French ambassador to Yemen, Marcel Laugel, were to return Sunday to France on a regular flight.

The French tourists were accompanied by a delegation of negotiators sent earlier in the week by the government to secure their release.

The three had been detained near the village of Al Madan, 200 kilometres northwest of the capital. They had been abducted in Hajja province while on a tour organised by Club Adventure, the company's director in Paris said.

On Feb. 1, reliable Yemeni sources said the authorities had told the captors in a letter they would look into demands for a road into the tribesmen's remote mountain fief.

The powerful Hashed tribes, whose land surrounds the Ahnum, had altered the direction of the contested road.

The Ahnum were demanding that a road be built to bypass Hashed land, so that their goods could be delivered to other parts of the country safely.

Last month the English-

language Yemen Times reported that the Ministry of Public Works had come under strong pressure from the Hashed tribal chief, Sheikh Abdullah Al Ahmar, who is the parliamentary speaker, to re-route the road so as to skirt the Ahnum enclave.

Hashed tribesmen had cut off supplies to the remote mountain village in northwestern Yemen where the French tourists were held to force the kidnappers' surrender.

President Ali Abdallah Saleh recently warned kidnappers in Yemen they would not escape unpunished following the detention of the French tourists.

Mr. Mutawakil said the release of the three hostages was thanks to mediation efforts, notably by chiefs of the Bakil tribal group of which Ahnum are members.

Tribes frequently kidnap foreigners, particularly Western oil workers, as leverage in dealing with the government.

Sheikh Ahmar is speaker of parliament and leader of the Islah Party, an Islamist group that is a member in the three-party government coalition.

Hashed and Bakil are the biggest tribal confederations in what used to be North Yemen.

COLUMN

Woman makes allegations against Clinton

WASHINGTON (R) — An Arkansas woman, appearing at a news conference with others who have accused Bill Clinton of sexual misdeeds, said Friday that Mr. Clinton had asked her for "a type of sex" when the two were alone in an Arkansas hotel room in 1991. The White House promptly denied the woman's account and said President Clinton did not know her. The woman, Paula Jones, declined to specify what Mr. Clinton asked her to do but when questioned directly whether Mr. Clinton had asked her to have sex with him, Ms. Jones replied, "a type of sex." "He took my hand, it was loosening his tie," Ms. Jones told reporters at the news conference. She said Mr. Clinton told her, "you have nice curves. I love the way your hair goes down your body." Ms. Jones said she rebuffed Mr. Clinton's alleged overtures and left the hotel room within 20 minutes. "It's not true," said White House Communications Director Mark Gearan. "The incident never happened." Another senior White House official denounced the event as a "republican dog and pony show aimed at attacking Mr. Clinton."

U.S. executive says Pope right on TV violence

NEW YORK (R) — Pope John Paul II's attacks on television as excessively violent and harmful to world society are largely on target, a top U.S. television programming executive said. "The Pope is right. There is a lot of very violent television on all over the world," said Ted Harbert, president of ABC Entertainment and a leading influence on what television shows appear on one of America's biggest broadcast networks. But Mr. Harbert, speaking as part of an industry panel, said the U.S. networks are unfairly charged with emphasizing violent and anti-social shows in their programming and not given credit for reducing in recent years the violent scenes in network shows. The Pope has several times in recent weeks depicted television programming as harmful to family and social life and urged the worldwide television industry to police itself by adopting a code of ethics for programming. Besides at times promoting poor role models and undermining morals, the Pope said, television can "isolate family members in their private worlds, cutting them off from authentic interpersonal relations it can also divide the family by alienating parents from children and children from parents."

Swiss magistrate suspended for drug addiction

ZURICH, Switzerland (AP) — A Zurich examining magistrate has been suspended and faces disciplinary and legal action for his addiction to cocaine, the local prosecutor said Friday. Hansruedi Muller, the prosecutor, said the 30-year-old judge, who was not identified, had been using cocaine once a month.

Archbishop says church dull for the young

LONDON (AFP) — The Archbishop of Canterbury said the Church of England was unattractive to young people and might lack a positive attitude towards sexuality, the Times reported Saturday. He made the comments in a book he was to publish next month about his visit to the non-denominational taize religious community in France. While he praised the French religious community, he cited criticisms from young people that the Church of England had "wordy services" and "long lessons, lots of prayers, dull sermons and hymns that drag on" and condemned its failure to have a youth policy, the paper said. The archbishop also said in his book "spiritual journey" that, historically, the Church of England's attitude to sex "has been far from wholesome and positive" and that positive attitudes towards sexuality might have been overlooked.